

JAMES SILK BUCKINGHAM





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*A portrait bust by W. Theed, exhibited at the Royal Academy, 1845, now in
Cutlers' Hall, Sheffield
[Photograph by the courtesy of David Flather, Master Cutler, 1926-27]*

JAMES SILK BUCKINGHAM
1786-1855
A SOCIAL BIOGRAPHY

by

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To
Olive Nicodemus

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PREFACE

IN 1851 *The London Illustrated News*, surveying the progress of the first half of the nineteenth century, observed, "At the beginning of the century the lower classes were invariably ridiculed, despised, and oppressed under the opprobrious epithets of the 'unwashed' and the 'swinish multitude,'" and asserted that the dissolution of this attitude was "the crowning improvement" of the half-century. It said further, noting the disappearance of impressment, "The public feeling, which makes it impossible for the state now to perpetrate similar outrages, marks as great a moral improvement as the use of gas and the railroads shows an improvement in our physical conditions" Specifically, in his Parliamentary leadership for the abolition of impressment, and generally, in his agitations for other reforms, James Silk Buckingham is significant as a representative figure among the host of men who wrought this "crowning improvement."

His life—1786 to 1855—spanned the decades of the primary impact of the French Revolution upon the traditional order, as well as the formative period of the new industrial regime, to his credit he realized that the dogmas of the former would not beget justice under the conditions of the latter. The geographical range of his career—England, India, Europe, and America—gave him a world outlook, few men of his time saw more of the world and its inhabitants. In a sense, as his works of travel show, he was a student of cultures, and in comparing them he found support for the conviction that social change was not only desirable but also possible. And the variety of his interests—the freedom of the press, colonial self-government, free trade, taxation, the abolition of slavery, the extension of suffrage, public education, marine reform, world peace, temperance, and the improvement of urban life—brought him in contact with the essential forces of his age, in so far as those forces supported or resisted social change.

Buckingham reached the stage of public life through a series of events which form a little-known chapter in English history. At the beginning the events occurred as a newspaper broil in Bengal, in development they merged with English politics of the reform period; in larger meaning they were a phase of the post-French Revolutionary conflict between the Reaction and Liberalism and, more note-

worthy, a forecast of the struggle of overseas subject races against European imperialism. The conduct of the East India Company and its agents revealed the attitude of those privileged groups which, while exploiting common men, called them the "swinish multitude", Buckingham's protests against this conduct displayed the sentiments which began the dissolution of that attitude both in England and in India. The roots of the contemporary Indian situation reach back into the controversies of which Buckingham, as editor of *The Calcutta Journal*, was the very centre. The East India Company has passed into history as the foremost creator of the old British Empire, Buckingham emerges from history as an early prophet of colonial self-government and democratic internationalism, alike exemplified in the British Commonwealth of Nations.

On the personal side his career was filled with adventure and changes of fortune—he was the mariner in the sailor's yarn, the hero in the villain's clutches, and a prophet in his own country. And he was writing verses to his wife after forty-nine years of marital adjustments. The documents tell many exciting stories, but the reader is not obligated to believe all of them, it is something to a man's credit, however, that he can be proved to have been a liar on only one occasion.

The designation "a social biography" means to suggest that, although Buckingham has been portrayed as a personality, this portrayal has been contributory to the study of the "moral improvement" of which *The Illustrated News* boasted. The circumstances of Buckingham's career have made possible not only sketches of those historically typical conditions under which the masses have lived or are now living—the traditional civilization, *Babylon*, the democratic order in America, and the new industrial regime in England, *Manchester*—but also statements of those ideals—*Utopias*—which his age set forth. The accounts of the controversies over those reforms to which Buckingham gave support describe that conflict of interests and attitudes which marked at once the disintegration of the traditional culture and the emergence of "the Great Society." Beside the technological and political revolutions, Buckingham's age witnessed the beginnings of an ethical revolution which must mean ultimately the organization of society in terms of the needs and interests of aspiring common men. The twentieth century is keenly appreciative of machinery.

and political democracy, it needs to understand, as Buckingham did, that their full contribution to human welfare can be realized only in the completion of this ethical revolution. In harmony with the spirit of the age and the man, the *people* have been kept in the foreground of the study

It was usual among those who opposed Buckingham to characterize him as shallow and erratic, and, in the main, the judgment has survived. Its refutation is to be found in the consistency of the man's thought and action. His great faults were vanity and an excessive confidence in the capacity of men to do the good. The former is not a rare human frailty, the latter is the typical error of his age. He shared "*le simpisme*," which is the leading characteristic of early nineteenth-century English thought, but not in a greater portion than most of his better-known contemporaries. From the opening of his career, as editor of *The Calcutta Journal*, to the close of his life, as president of the London Temperance League, he was notoriously on the side of reforms, as was noted more than once by his friends and supporters, he was in advance of his time—"a pioneer of public opinion." Perhaps the fairer judgment is that, among those Englishmen actively engaged in agitating reforms—Wilberforce, Owen, Cobbett, Place, Hume, Wakefield, Cobden, and Ashley—not one was broader in his sympathies nor more accurate in his insights into either the problems of the traditional order or the more pregnant issues of the rising "Great Society." Other men acquired reputation and lasting fame by labouring successfully in one field of reform, Buckingham's significance becomes apparent only through a synthesis of his thought and action.

In presenting the results of his research, the author has adopted certain practices, with respect to quotations and references, which he wishes to make clear. The quotations from contemporary sources—numerous and, in many instances, long—fall into three classes. first, descriptions of social conditions, second, expressions of current opinions, and, third, statements from Buckingham. The references are to contemporary sources, except where later materials bear directly upon the point under discussion. Often the citations have been grouped at the end of a paragraph, for the evident reason that to have scattered them would have greatly burdened the text; notes for many minor points have not been given at all. And no attempt has been made to indicate the author's large use of secondary materials, only works actually cited are listed in the bibliography.

Among those persons to whom the author is especially indebted are, first, those instructors who taught him the meaning of history—Miss Clara May Daley and Professor H G Plum of the State University of Iowa, and Professor G G Benjamin of the University of Southern California. For the intellectual stimulation and friendly counsel which have made his research possible, the author thanks Professor Carlton J H Hayes of Columbia University; Professors Robert L Schuyler and Dixon Ryan Fox, also of Columbia University, took a kindly interest in the project. Mr David Flather of Sheffield, England, was helpful in securing materials relating to Buckingham's Parliamentary career. The author thanks his colleagues, Doctors J. W Oliver, J J Geise, and Carroll J Amundson and Messrs Leon Marshall and Nathan Shappee, for friendly support. To Hartley F. Simpson, who read the book in manuscript, the author offers a twofold thanks, as a friend and as a student who realizes that the obligation for honest criticism cannot be paid. Words are inadequate to the statement of that service which the author's wife has rendered in the preparation of the book.

In assuming full responsibility for the errors and false judgments of the book, the author feels that no better authority on the common fault of biographers than the subject of his study can be cited.

The ordinary failing of biographers is partiality for the subject of their memoirs. This, much more frequently than want of judgment, leads them to make false estimates of his virtues and abilities, and dims and obscures their perception of his errors and failings.

If the author has been partial to his subject, he has only vindicated Buckingham's judgment, if he has dealt with his subject fairly, he has done all that Buckingham would wish.

Ralph E. Turner

A CHRONOLOGY OF BUCKINGHAM'S CAREER

- 1786 Born at Flushing, Cornwall
- 1796 Sailed to Lisbon on a mail-packet
- 1797 Captured by a French privateer, imprisoned at Corunna
- 1798-1801 Employed in a nautical instrument shop at Devonport
- 1802 Volunteered for the Royal Navy and deserted
- 1806 Married Elizabeth Jennings, loss of the family estate in a smuggling scheme
- 1807-1810 Sailed in the Atlantic, became a merchant captain
- 1811-1812 Sailed in the Mediterranean
- 1813-1814 Wandered about Egypt, projected a scheme for opening the Red Sea route to India
- 1815 Journeyed to Bombay, expelled from India and returned to Egypt
- 1816 Journeyed overland through Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia, arrived a second time in Bombay
- 1817 Sailed from Bombay to Bussorah
- 1818 Arrived in Calcutta, refused the command of a slaver to Zanzibar, founded *The Calcutta Journal* and began a struggle for a free press
- 1821 Published *Travels in Palestine*
- 1823 Expelled from India by John Adam, acting Governor-General, *The Calcutta Journal* suppressed
- 1824 Founded *The Oriental Herald and Colonial Review* and began an agitation for colonial reform, attempted to secure compensation for financial losses in India
- 1827 Founded *The Sphynx*
- 1828 Founded *The Athenaeum*
- 1829 Toured the commercial towns and spoke against the continuation of the East India Company's trading privileges
- 1830 Visited Paris and lectured on the Oriental countries
- 1832 Elected to the First Reformed Parliament for Sheffield

1833 Established *The Parliamentary Review*, opposed the continuation of the East India Company's government in India, advocated the abolition of impressment and flogging in the Navy, supported a great variety of proposed reforms

1834 Appointed chairman of a select committee to investigate the causes of drunkenness, brought forward a bill to empower towns to raise money for the construction and maintenance of parks, playgrounds, museums, and libraries, became a vice-president of the British and Foreign Temperance Society, toured the Midlands and Ireland advocating temperance, a select committee appointed to investigate his claim to compensation for financial losses in India

1835 Appointed chairman of a select committee to investigate the causes of shipwrecks, advocated the creation of a marine board, became president of the British Teetotal Temperance Society and a vice-president of the British Association for the Promotion of Temperance

1836 Defeat in the Commons of his claims for compensation for financial losses in India, joined in the formation of the Anti-Corn Law Association

1837 Resigned his seat in Parliament, sailed to the United States

1838-1840 Toured United States and Canada, advocated temperance

1841-1842 Lectured for the Anti-Corn Law League, became a vice-president of the National Temperance Society

1844 Founded the British and Foreign Institute

1846 Attended the World's Temperance Convention, London

1848 Attended the World's Peace Congress, Brussels

1849 Proposed the founding of a "model town"

1851 Became president of the London Temperance League, put on the civil list for two hundred pounds

1853 Advocated "prohibition" for England

1855 Died, buried in Kensal Green Cemetery, London

JAMES SILK BUCKINGHAM

CHAPTER I

WHAT ELSE CAN A SAILOR BE?

I 1786 THE WORLD MOVES

CALONNE negotiated a new loan for eighty million livres Marie the Austrian prepared to surrender the Dauphin into the care of a male tutor Madame de la Motte, for an attempt to appropriate 1,400,000 francs on a diamond necklace, was whipped, branded on both shoulders, and, with a rope around her neck, locked up for ever Because the Parlement of Dijon refused to register new taxes, its members were imprisoned by *lettres de cachet* France enjoyed the blessings of the *ancien régime*, but Figaro smiled impishly

In the Middle East even as Babylon lay under the dust of the centuries, so lay the people under the tradition of her ancient polity, and Mehemet Ali was selling tobacco in his native Kavala

Although the Directors of the East India Company had decided that forty thousand pounds, in addition to the lawful emolument, was not too great a sum for a Governor-General of Bengal to acquire in one year, Lord Cornwallis, "much against his will and with grief in his heart," sailed for far-off Calcutta But others were departing from the same place with heavy hearts, for a clause in Pitt's India Act required each of the Company's agents to state under oath the value of the property which he was bringing home with him The resident English received the new Governor-General with enthusiasm and the usual salute of nineteen guns and three volleys of side arms, at the same time they protested in a petition to the King that the act exposing his Majesty's subjects residing in the Presidency to be sent forcibly to England (if the Governor-General so ordered) "is highly dangerous to the security of their persons and fortunes"¹

There was terror along the coasts of West Central Africa Rum weakened with water and heated with cayenne pepper aroused the ferocity of the negroes who hunted their kind, guns exploding in

¹ *The Gentleman's Magazine*, LVI (1786), 69.

their hands at the first discharge added hazard to the expeditions. Jamaica grew rich on the rum, Birmingham on the guns, and, next to London, Liverpool became the first port in England on the profitable trade in the quarry of the marauders. The slave trade was a merry commerce.

From America there came alarming news of Indian troubles on the frontiers, of Massachusetts farmers in rebellion again, and of a Virginia proposal for a convention to form a stronger constitution. *The Gentleman's Magazine* described this scene in the sentence, "Chaos is come again," but failed to envisage the recent victor over Lord Cornwallis, who was soon to become the chairman of a convention to form "a stronger constitution." At the moment, however, Washington was busy with the details of husbandry, planting French honeysuckles and weeping willows, winnowing wild onion seed from the oats, and mixing the proper rations for cart-horses.

In England law and order, peace and tranquillity prevailed. Pitt laboured with the then current phase of the financial problem, Burke discovered the iniquities of English rule in India, and George III enjoyed a return of sanity and a renewed popularity. Marie Nicholson's attempt to assassinate him had sent her to Bedlam and him to the hearts of the people. Robberies were common, highwaymen ranked as gentlemen, and their techniques were notably modern. Did they not post handbills at the gates of rich Londoners, forbidding them on pain of death to travel without a watch or with less than ten guineas in money? But these were also "the good old hanging days," and Old Bailey did its duty. At the December sessions twenty-three were sentenced to be hanged, fifty-two to be transported, and seventeen to be flogged. The English were a bit rusty at the trick of making fraudulent bankruptcies, and the debtors' prisons not only were crowded but also were often the scenes of high revelry. With hawkers crying the charms of women about the streets, with the wonders of balloon ascensions, of hypnotism, and of dephlogisticated air, and with the last volume but one of Gibbon's history and the first book of Burns' poems, those Englishmen who were neither intoxicated nor in jail could find amusement. In the shops they could see boys, five and six years old, employed at "trifling business," but that was nothing either to amuse or to shock. The young must learn the discipline of labour.

In spite of minor incidents of interest and drama, the kaleidoscope of events repeated monotonously the grand pattern of tradition. In

July a hurricane devastated the harbour of Falmouth in Cornwall, and on the twenty-fifth day of the next month a son was born to a family of the same harbour.² Of this latter event the kaleidoscope showed nothing, for the traditional culture took little notice of common humanity, either in birth or in death, except to collect taxes and enforce obedience. And in 1786 the traditional order functioned well.

2 CROSS-CURRENTS IN LATE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

How vanishing are common men! Like vague shadows they disappear in the darkness behind the spotlight that falls upon the heroic and the notorious, like the curtain of the stage they serve only to envelope the scene—the scene within which the futile drama of what Buckingham called “Tory history” moves. “A few leading characters, or prominent situations, are brought forward and decked out for dramatic effect; the people, the good of society, general principles are thrown in the background, or come in only as a chorus or a mob.”³ Because Buckingham would have it so, one must peer at the common folk of the late eighteenth century, he was an early protagonist of the “new history.”

Wherever one might look—as widely as Buckingham did look, in India at the ryot, in Egypt at the fellah, in Europe at the peasant, in America at the farmer, or in England at the yokel—he would see man first as the tiller of the soil, “Johnny Raw,” the common type of man since his ancestors in neolithic times had settled down to the land, the village, and tradition. And the countryside was no Arcady of blooming flowers, singing birds, and joyous people. Wordsworth sounded its true note in “The Solitary Reaper”

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
 For old, unhappy far off things,
 And battles long ago
 Or is it some more humble lay,
 Familiar matters of to-day?
 Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
 That has been, and may be again?

² J. S. Buckingham, *Autobiography* (2 vols., London, 1855), I, 4.

³ *The Sphynx*, January 1, 1828, J. S. Buckingham, editor.

If one confines his view to the English rural scene, he may be certain that the plaint was of familiar things that had been, were now, and would be again. The thatched cottage, so lovely in a painting, sheltered no contented household, William Cowper's "The Peasant's Nest" testified to that

the dweller in that still retreat
Dearly obtains the shelter it affords

. . .
He dips his bowl into the weedy ditch
And heavy laden brings his beverage home

The Cornish ploughman, hoarse from the raucous chant which kept the sluggish oxen moving, came home to a hovel beside a dung-pit to eat a supper of barley-bread, skim-milk cheese, and coarse vegetables and to sleep with three or four others in a dirty bed. Buckingham's native Cornwall was suffering from the general rural decay and fast becoming "a sullen, solitary scene." Social and economic forces beyond the agricultural worker's power either to comprehend or to control were engulfing him in poverty and wretchedness. His family, too large for him to support, scattered or died, while he, deprived of his land by enclosures and employed irregularly, drifted to the village ale-house, where he found in liquor the only escape from his misery.

The romantic poet saw the countryside as nature's loveliest shape, but the historian discovers it to be a slough of human wretchedness. The pauper club, gathered in the village workhouse and marked with the pewter badges of public charity, the highwaymen on the roads, and the impoverished workers in the fields reveal to the unsentimental eye the foundations of aristocracy, *bon-ton*, and cheap romanticism.

The poet saw no more of the common folk than those who were necessary to his idyll, to have seen the denizens of eighteenth-century English cities and remained a poet would have been impossible. Of beauty the agricultural worker at least had nature, the artisan, the shopkeeper, and the sailor home from the sea had nothing of beauty, either natural or spiritual, except the homely sentiments of daily life—affection, hospitality, and satisfaction in duties well performed—and these were overlooked by the conservative moralists who complained that the people were losing the solid virtues of their ancestors—simplicity, foresight, frugality, and obedience. When one looks at the cellars and rookeries which

housed the urban workers, virtue, like beauty, ceases to be an object of search, one wonders that there is life

In Sheffield—"Sheffield the Black! in ugliness supreme"—about Paradise Square, in Silver Street, down Pudding Lane, beside True Love's Gutter, near Angel Inn, one caught glimpses of the life of the urban workers. For labour there were the forge, the grindstone, and the master cutler, who sometimes demanded thirteen blades to the dozen. Ordinary labourers received two shillings a day, with a pint of ale and a half of a quatern loaf in addition. For worship there was the parish church, with an official "knock-nobber" inside to keep the devout awake and a "dog-whipper" outside to silence the yelping curs of the street. Beside the church door were the stocks in which those caught tippling during the services were placed. On weekdays boys and girls who wanted jobs stood on the tops of tombstones, and masters chose new servants by pinching their arms and legs. For amusement there were the ale-houses, the streets, and the square, in the last were exhibitions of bull-baiting, bear-baiting, cock-fighting, dog-fighting, and football. Bowling, skittles, and quoits were games for less public places. Blind fiddlers and ballad-makers provided music and song for all occasions. Joseph Mather, the town's laureate, increased his fame by driving a master cutler to an early grave with jests and ribaldry. Mather knew the spirit of the traditional society

The blades they are sent to the wheel to be ground,
So we find the grinding trade goes the world round,
The rich grind the poor, and the great grind the small,
Thus we grind one another till death grinds us all ⁴

To one another "the apron-men" were kindly, hospitable, and affectionate. Saturday night was their time for rough comradeship and gentler associations. Mather also knew these kindlier moods.

As through the dark alleys, if sly one pops,
What fun they may hear, if an ear they will lend,
Such sighs and soft wishes from lads and from lasses,
Who tell their fond tales at an entry end

Then he to his true love
Says, "Polly, adieu, love,"
And kisses and squeezes his lassie so tight,
And softly she'll cry, "Sir,"
She'll blush and say, "Fie, Sir,
Can't you stay a bit longer?—it's Saturday night" ⁵

⁴ John Wilson, *The Songs of Joseph Mather* (Sheffield, 1862), 92 ⁵ *Ibid.* 88.

But the rabble had an insolent and sullen hatred for those intimate wielders of authority, the masters, vicars, and jailers. Attacks on the jail, popularly known as the "parlour," were frequent. In 1791 a mob wrecked the jailer's house and burnt the vicar's library. With ten thousand persons receiving poor aid, in a population of about forty-five thousand, such outbreaks were in all probability only a mild release for the bitterness that rankled in the breasts of the poor.⁶

In spite of the fact that Arthur Young traced the growth of pauperism to tea-drinking and Oliver Goldsmith saw in the use of toothpicks by the lower classes a sign of social decay, one need not inquire into the extravagance of the people. They had no luxuries, even liquor was a necessity.

"Old establishments are tried by their effects. If the people are happy, united, wealthy, and powerful, we presume the rest." Burke presumed that the established order begot such blessings and therefore should endure for ever. But he was not looking at an England whose poor relief had increased six times as fast as the population, of which nearly one-seventh was receiving public aid. He was looking at France buying liberty with crime, and that liberty he defined in terms of insecurity for property. Quite as truthfully it can be said that the English ruling class was buying security for property with crime. The enclosure acts, the corn laws, the commodity taxes, and the acts for the suppression of political agitation can be described as only a little less than criminal, when they are correlated with the destruction of the common lands, the ruin of the villages, the lowering of the standard of living, the increase of pauperism, the prevalence of crime, the migrations of the people, and the degradation of their lives. And all this occurred at a time when England by new agricultural and industrial techniques was adding greatly to the productivity of labour, even at a time when Burke could declare, "The Christian statesmen of this land would indeed first provide for the multitude. . . ."

Although one may rightly wonder what Burke meant by the word "provide," one can acquit the aristocracy of deliberate criminal intent. Self-interest defined by tradition guided its policies, and the lower classes, blinded by ignorance, accepted the tradition and with it the leadership of their masters. Not yet had England

⁶ R. E. Leader, *Reminiscences of Old Sheffield, its streets and its people* (Sheffield, 1875), *passim*.

passed under the rule of the middle class—the merchants, entrepreneurs, and financiers, and their common sense that obvious directness of thought which identified self-interest and ethical decision without either the necessity of philosophy or the deception of sophistry. This was for later times when the aristocracy and workers alike would be alive to the problem of providing for the people—the former as a means of defence against the middle class, the latter as an assertion of their own rights in the nation.

The roots of the established order, as Burke so eloquently explained, were deep in the past, but its current shape was the work of modern forces. Its immediate origin was in the sixteenth-century religious and economic revolutions, which Cobbett said had begun the impoverishment of the people. Subsequently the expansion of commerce, the agricultural revolution, and the rise of industrial capitalism, while adding enormously to the wealth of the nation, had continued the degradation of the masses. At the same time the yeomanry was wrecked again, and another body of new rich was raised up, whose members, by the purchase of land, came to share with the older aristocracy the advantages of power. Notwithstanding George III's decree that no man rich by trade alone should be ennobled, Dr. Johnson described the merchant as "a new species of English gentleman," and Pitt, the heir of an Indian interloper, displayed the skill of the new aristocracy in serving tradition. The Peels had their feet on the lower rung of the political ladder, but capital was not yet in a position to assert its independence of land as a means of influence, prestige, and elegance.

Apparently the middle class cared little for direct political power outside local affairs. Prosperity, nourished during the past two centuries by successful wars against Spain, Holland, and France and sheltered by the mercantile system, had created a confidence in the aristocratic leadership. Except for a murmuring against the East India Company's monopoly, there was no agitation against the restrictions on trade, the attack on the protective system was to wait another entire generation before it received any generous support from the trading interest, although Adam Smith had recently given it an expression which was to become classic. And only a little more attention was given to political reform. The first petition for representation from a "great town" was sent up by Sheffield in 1793. Prosperity, contentment, and monotony seemed to satisfy the great majority of those who had grown rich in com-

merce, industry, and profession. With well-kept debt books in their pockets, with their women timid if not adoring, and with the simple amusements of the tavern and bowling green, middle-class men were content to let respectability mark them off from the vulgar excesses of the poor and the stupid extravagances of the aristocracy.

The nobility was the "Corinthian capitol" of the social system, which the lower orders, redeemed from their crudities by its gentility, existed to support. By right of birth the ruling class claimed a superiority over the remainder of the nation and by virtue of the possession of land exercised a domination which functioned through a monopoly of political power and a control of the economic surplus. The heart of the traditional society was the acceptance of this claim and domination by both the people and the aristocracy. Its shield was the hereditary principle which kept the landed interest intact from generation to generation. Conservatism completed the trinity of the aristocratic faith—gentility, dominance, and conservatism. In letters to his illegitimate son, Lord Chesterfield left a record of the gentility, a model of behaviour upon which modern wives, with less than a half-knowledge of the prototype, commonly attempt to reconstruct their husbands. The conservatism was well displayed by the same gentleman when, upon receiving a letter carrying a wafer, as stamps were then called, he remarked, "The rascal sent me his spittle." Utility had not yet triumphed over refinement. Bishop Horsely's declaration that he did not know what the mass of the people in any country had to do with the laws but to obey them was a forthright assertion of the dominance.

The ideal of the traditional society was well expressed by Dr. Johnson. "A man of family and estate ought to consider himself as having charge of a district over which he is to diffuse civility and happiness." The duties of the masses to their superiors were balanced by the obligations of the latter to render those social services by which security and contentment were made universal. It was an integrated society, status and obligation binding all its members in a common welfare and, if one believes Crabbe, in more intimate relations.

Nor are the nymphs that breathe the rural air
So fair as Cynthia's nor so chaste as fair
These to the town afford each fresher face,
And the clown's trull receives the peer's embrace,
From whom, should chance again convey her down,
The peer's disease in turn attacks the clown

Apparently other things than civility and happiness were diffused. But one does not dare to think that the aristocratic ideal was impossible of realization, for the learned Dr. Johnson once knew a poor clergyman who, possessing an orchard, reared a large family by feeding its members chiefly on apple dumplings. In the traditional society anything was possible, that is, as long as the people remained contented—

Though poor, we are honest and very content,
We pay as we go, for meat, drink, and rent

—and the rent was paid, anything was possible but change

As the exemplar of a civilization bred in the soil, the traditional order was above all static. Institutions changed slowly, if at all, and always in the direction of what was believed to have been a remote age of justice and liberty. And motion was not yet a principle of civilization. The overwhelming mass of the population lived in rural hamlets and never travelled thirty miles from home once in a lifetime. In Buckingham's native Cornwall the gentry were accustomed to make their wills before setting out on a journey to London, two-hundred-odd miles away.

To all intents and purposes English society of the late eighteenth century stood as it had been organized in the time of William the Conqueror. The people, illiterate, steeped in the heritage of custom, isolated from each other and the world at large, and superstitious with fears generated by the insecurity of life and the teachings of religion, kept at their labours unceasingly and with fortitude. Perhaps they realized, as William Paley said in *Reasons for Contentment*, that success in making both ends meet was a moral achievement denied to the rich.

From time to time in past centuries the aristocracy had absorbed new elements, and on other occasions it had resisted both the king and the people, always, however, it had persisted until, at the end of the eighteenth century, there were no limitations on its power except that law which was framed to serve its interests and that patriotism which established its interests as those of the nation. When dangerous ideas arose, the aristocracy met them with the keen awareness which prompted Horace Walpole to declare that no criticism of the Old Testament should ever be uttered within the hearing of a single footman. The established order maintained itself by keeping alive in the minds of the people the belief in a

fixed status for each class; as Jack argued in *Hannah More's Village Politics*, "Duties are fixed, Tom, laws are settled, a Christian can't pick and choose whether he will obey it or let it alone." The Constitution was a sacred thing.

About London, however, there were to be seen bad omens for the established order. Big wigs, peach-coloured silk coats, lace ruffles, and swords were giving way to the habiliments of the present. drab and democratic garb. Jonas Hanway startled the city by appearing on the street clad in a fur-lined suit and three pairs of silk stockings and protected by an umbrella, the first carried there publicly by any man. Was this not the wild project of a revolutionary age? And John Hetherington found himself arrested and charged with inciting a riot for walking along the Strand crowned with his own invention, the silk top-hat. The old society was not to pass without disorder. Meanwhile trousers lengthened—below the knees in 1785, to the ankles in 1793—and hair shortened to a close crop. Although the Earl of Scarborough kept his six frizeurs and those who carried umbrellas were laughed at as "rain-beaux," wild youths, Jacobin sympathizers, the middle classes, and even the fashionables adopted the new modes.

Just as the riots of the French *sans culottes* hastened these changes in styles, so also did the Paris disturbances stir the currents of English opinion. No longer were the masses to go without champions. Tom Paine, assailing the hereditary principle which laid the dead hand of the past upon the present, led the van with the cry, "I contend for the rights of the living." Mary Wollstonecraft, who vindicated the rights of both man and woman, pierced the veil of traditional sentimentality to lay bare the miseries of the underling. "Hell stalks abroad—the lash resounds on the slave's naked sides, the sick wretch who can no longer earn the sour bread of unrelenting labours steals to the ditch to bid the world a long good night." And Thelwall described the people as the makers of progress, denying the long unchallenged claims of philosophers, priests, and aristocrats to the authorship of the welfare of nations.

But the English Radicals, like the French Jacobins, were confused in their demands "Liberty, equality, and fraternity," "the rights of man," and then what? Four million pounds for poor relief and a heavy income tax said Paine. The end of the land monopoly argued Spence. A redistribution of wealth contended Thelwall. All agreed that political reform was necessary, with universal manhood

suffrage and annually elected parliaments the people could free themselves from the burdens unjustly imposed upon them by their aristocratic masters. The prophets were convinced that excessive taxation was the taproot of social evil. This political programme—a native English product of seventeenth-century origin—had been recently revived in the agitations of the notorious John Wilkes, had received a full exposition in Major-General John Cartwright's pamphlet, *Take Your Choice*, and had achieved the status of a menace to the aristocratic oligarchy in the reform philanderings of Charles James Fox. The way to the perfect society was uncharted, but its chief aspects were clearly visioned in an agricultural utopia, uncontaminated by the vices of commerce and industry, where Johnny Raw would till his own land, drink his own ale, and love his own wife, provided that she did not learn that finest bit of Radicalism as taught—and practised—by Mary the Vindicator.

Only a few of the people heard these cries in their behalf, but these few became nervously active. Unfortunately their mood was not as temperate as that of their intellectual champions. Mackintosh praised the sweetness and light which liberated reason would spread over the world, and Paine called upon men to perform two simple duties, one to God—"which every man must feel"—and the other to man—"to do as he would be done by"—but the people felt more violent sentiments. In 1791 the small masters and journeymen cutlers of Sheffield set up a Reform Society and approached the London Constitutional Society with the suggestion of holding a national convention for considering the complaints of the people. The "apron-men" were not interested in theoretical rights, they wanted to know why it was that, when a man worked thirteen or fourteen hours a day, he was unable to support his family. Mather again spoke the popular mind:

Despots may howl and yell,
Tho' they're in league with hell,
They'll not reign long

This fiercer temper quickly frightened the rulers of the state. In May, 1792, the King issued a proclamation against "wicked, seditious, printed, published, and industriously dispersed writings." His Majesty's judges left no doubt as to the dangerous character of anyone who criticized the established authorities, "He who 'scattereth firebrands, arrows, and death' (which if not an accurate

definition, is an intelligible description of a libel) is *et ratione* criminal ⁷ Pitt was more explicit the crime was that of attacking the hereditary nobility

When Paine, who had escaped to France along with other Radicals (among whom was one Cutlar Fergusson), was tried for treason, Erskine answered the proponents of repression in an eloquent defence of the freedom of the press

Every man, not intending to mislead, but seeking to enlighten others with what his own reason and conscience, however erroneously, have dictated to him as truth, may address himself to the universal reason of a whole nation, either on the subject of governments in general, or upon that of our own particular country,—that he may analyse the principles of its constitution,—point out its errors and defects,—examine and publish its corruptions,—warn his fellow citizens against their ruinous consequences,—and exert his whole faculties in pointing out the most advantageous changes in establishments which he considers to be radically defective or sliding from their object by abuse

• • • •

In this manner power has reasoned in every age —Government, in *its own estimation*, has been at *all times* a system of perfection, but a free press has examined and detected its errors, and the people have from time to time reformed them —This freedom alone has made our Government what it is, this freedom can alone preserve it ⁸

But the great lawyer and his Society of the Friends of the Free Press were helpless before the frightened authorities, who found in the common law of libel and the statute law of the press a first-line defence against the revolutionaries By 1795 Lord Eldon could boast that there had been more convictions for libel than in the two decades before 1792

But movements ultimately more powerful for change than French Jacobinism escaped the attention of the guardians of the state Why should they, terrified by English ideas in foreign costumes and busy with Arthur Young's suggestions for improving the cultivation of their lands, recently increased by enclosures, worry about the contrivances of a barber and a maker of scientific instruments?

For fifty years before Buckingham's birth the spirit of mechanical invention, hostile in nature to every part of the conservative tradi-

⁷ *Parliamentary Debates*, XXIX (1791-92), 1365.

⁸ *State Trials*, XXII, 414 *et seq*

sion, had been transforming England's industries. In those parts of the country where the demand of the colonial markets became effective, devices to aid production multiplied amazingly. About Manchester John Aikin noted the reaction of these new techniques upon the older crafts. Clock-makers turned to cutting cog-wheels for the rollers of the spinning machine, harness-workers became adept at placing leather bands on the same rollers, and foundry-men and tin-platers found themselves shaping metal into new and curious forms. Every cotton mill was an academy of mechanical science, and mechanical invention was spreading over the whole kingdom.⁹

Buckingham's native Cornwall felt the presence of the new contrivances in the ancient industry of tin-mining, which offered to Watt and Boulton the best market for their engines. Before the sailor boy had grown to manhood Watt journeyed into the Cornish hills to lay injunctions against Richard Trevithick, who had designed a pressure boiler for the steam engine and was shortly to put the engine on wheels, thereby inventing the locomotive. At the same time an insignificant plugman on a mining engine was so busy that he did not have time to learn to read, he was George Stephenson, the future creator of the railroad. And Humphry Davy had just left his home in Penzance to go up to London and become the world's first scientific technician.

Such phenomena were evidences of the growing use of machinery, which inspired the claim, then first put forward, that the mechanic and the engineer were the chief makers of social progress.

The outlines of the social order which machine technology was to create in the industrial city were already observable. Had not John Aikin also noted that Manchester, whose back streets he described as the homes of consumption, physical deformity, paralysis, and idiocy, was growing as rapidly as London? And had not Arkwright dreamed of buying up all the cotton in the world in order to enjoy the profits of monopoly? At that, without having realized his dream, he died the world's first industrial millionaire. Other capitalists were doing almost as well. In 1790 Robert Owen, youthful but dignified with a cultivated gravity, testified that the cotton manufacturers were making as much as

⁹ See John Aikin, *A Description of the Country from Thirty to Forty Miles round Manchester* (London, 1795), *passim*, and *Encyclopædia Britannica* (3rd ed., 1797), XVIII, "Strength of Materials."

seventeen thousand pounds annually. But evidences of social progress were not limited to the growth of new fortunes. Boulton, Watt's partner and the world's first expert in scientific management, was arguing that taxes ought to be levied upon vices, luxuries, and landed property, not upon capital employed in production. And Watt was complaining against the drunkenness of the labourers in the Soho Works.

Although the new manufacturers "were generally plodding men of business with little knowledge and limited ideas," they were sufficiently attentive to politics to organize in 1785 the Chamber of Manufacturers of Great Britain for the protection of their interests before Parliament. Nor were they unaware of the need for protection in other places. As early as 1782 the Scottish capitalists secured the enactment of a law making the wilful destruction of machinery and goods a capital crime without benefit of clergy. In 1790 the Sheffield masters organized against the scissor-grinders, who had combined in an effort to raise their wages. And in 1799 the spinners of Bolton opened a "Black Book," in which were listed the names of all the men whom they would no longer employ.

The ruling classes would have nothing to do with the Jacobin doctrine of natural rights, but by 1800 they were convinced that the sufferings of the people, like the rewards of their toil, were under the reign of natural law. An Anglican clergyman discovered that the poor, as a result of their imprudent breeding, were the authors of their own misery. And the political economists not only provided a defence against legislative interference in favour of the workers but also advanced a good argument against permitting them to unite for self-protection. But whatever comfort the aristocrats found in these doctrines they lost in the face of other conclusions of the new seers. Adam Smith had condemned their economic policy, "To gratify the most childish whim was the whole motive of the great proprietors," and as the century waned Ricardo, young but wise in the ways of the stock exchange, gained a fortune and the preparation for reducing, in theory at least, the old order to an anachronism.

The natural scientists also pronounced the old order's inevitable doom. Hutton argued that the eternal hills and waters were being continuously transformed by the uniform processes of nature, in a survey of stratified rocks about Bath, William Smith completed the first investigations of these transformations. And Erasmus

Darwin asserted that present forms of life, including man, had developed from a primordial filament. If such were the facts of nature's history, could anything as human as the old society be unchanging?

In the same manner the new literary romanticism snubbed aristocrats and ennobled common men. Nature mourned for "What Man had made of Man," but the mourning was of the hopeful mood which asked to "Sleep on, and dream of Heaven awhile" before awakening and to discover that "Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own." As a literary fashion English romanticism discovered humble things—dumb animals, children, the common people, their ballads and tales, as a philosophical movement it asserted that emotion was a safer guide than either reason or tradition and justified "liberty, equality, and fraternity" as the expression of the unconscious sympathies generated in the human heart.

But the prime expression of the romantic mood was in a religious awakening, which found not in political and economic reforms but in over-wrought emotions and rigid morality an escape from a sinful life and an unjust society. As a factor for social change, the Evangelicals were against the common immoralities and in favour of the virtues of capitalism—thrift, industry, and frugality—but they opposed Jacobinism, whose apostles were mostly Deists. To quote again Jack of *Hannah More's Village Politics*, were not the rights of man, "Battle, murder, and sudden death"? Jack's success in saving Tom from revolutionary opinions and acts, saving him to sing "Oh, the roast beef of Old England" and to appreciate the sermon on the text "Study to be quiet, work with your own hands, and mind your own business," caused the government to purchase copies of the tract for free distribution.

The Evangelical conception of man as a sinful being and the world as a wicked place contrasted sharply with the views of the Radicals and the political economists. Certainly the latter envisioned a just social order, and the former expected happiness as well as justice. The two alike believed that man, either by reason or by emotional intuition, had the capacity to recognize the good, the right, and the just and, having recognized them, would act accordingly. The Radicals, the literary romanticists, and the political economists shared basic articles of faith: man's perfectibility and his limitless progress. Indeed, they expected him, once he was

liberated from tradition, to become without delay Apollo, John Calvin, and Ben Franklin all in one, although just how much of the latter was to be included was not agreed upon.

Jeremy Bentham was hardly an economist and very slow in becoming a democrat, but he also had hopes for a better future. The traditional society was an ugly mess, and he was at no loss for ways to improve it. As a means of relieving the poor he proposed the organization of a joint-stock company, which would found "frugality banks," establish "frugality conveyances," and maintain "frugality inns." He projected beds of a special design with cribs attached for the babies. Applying his principle of utility with Aristotelian erudition, he could declare that lawyers were the only persons whose ignorance of the law went unpunished and that bankers did nothing which the state could not better. His principle of utility rested upon an utter simplification of human nature which reduced the determination of interests to the barest experiences, pain and pleasure, against this criterion of interests he balanced the super-generalization of "the greatest good of the greatest number" as the norm by which all social institutions and practices were to be judged. Moving with superior dialectics between this atomistic analysis of individual motivation and this all-inclusive synthesis of social controls, he subjected the existing society to a devastating criticism, particularly its legal forms, which he found hopelessly tangled and horribly cruel. Thus, setting his heart upon reform in criminal practice, he projected the Panopticon, a prison wherein the offender would be reclaimed from evil ways by the strict performance of distressingly rational acts under the ever-seeing eyes of guards. That he himself wept when Parliament refused a grant for the construction of the Panopticon did not lead him to realize that his psychology neglected emotion as a factor affecting behaviour. No one ever accused Bentham of being either sentimental or romantic, except in his overweening confidence in human reason, a misconception which he shared with the political economists.

Among all the forces of social change in the late eighteenth century none was more important than the Humanitarians, who sought to remove pain, poverty, disease, lonesomeness, and injustice from the lives of ordinary people. Because the Humanitarians possessed the great advantage of advocating no doctrine except that of relieving misery, they escaped the censure of the established authorities, but, unfortunately for their fame, misery is so common-

place that their efforts have gone largely unrecognized. The most interesting, as well as the most influential, of the Humanitarians was none other than Jonas Hanway of umbrella fame. Besides urging prison reform, he was active in improving the treatment of sailors, foundlings, chimney-sweeps, debtors, and paupers. In 1767 he persuaded Parliament to pass an act which provided for the creation of day nurseries for homeless infants, the success of the nurseries gained for his measure the popular title "The Act for Keeping Babies Alive." Two years later he aided in opening the first Magdalen Hospital for unmarried mothers. In 1780 he helped to found the Marine Society, which had for its purpose the sending of vagabond boys to the navy, but, inasmuch as the warships were hell-holes of vice, disease, and inhuman discipline, there can be reasonable doubts as to the charitable service rendered by the society.

After 1780 the Humanitarian Movement expanded rapidly. The London Strangers' Friends Society performed a useful work in protecting newcomers in the metropolis from the vampires who lived on such prey. In 1785 Robert Raikes founded the Sunday Schools, and two years later he claimed an attendance of 250,000 children. The aristocracy was afraid of education for the people, fearing, if they learned to read and write, that they would no longer work, especially at agriculture. "Who," it was asked, "ever heard of an agricultural Quaker?" As a matter of doctrine the Quakers opposed war, in practice they were the leading examples of business honesty. Even a child could trade with a Friend without being cheated. In 1787, largely as a result of Quaker agitation, Granville Sharp, Thomas Clarkson, and William Wilberforce established the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Perhaps the most significant manifestation of Humanitarianism was the Friendly Societies, clubs organized among the people, who by weekly contributions from their wages supported charitable aids to the sick, the lame, the widowed, the orphaned, and the aged. At least the masses were aware of their distresses. In 1786 these clubs were so prominent that John Acland proposed the organization of a national friendly society to deal with the problem of poverty.

As if to compensate for the political reaction of the 1790's which, by destroying the Revolution Society, the Society for Constitutional Information, the Society of the Friends of the People, and the London Correspondence Society, curbed the democratic agitation,

an interest in economic and sanitary reform appeared. In 1796 the Society for Bettering the Conditions and Increasing the Comforts of the Poor began the work of creating soup kitchens, clothing stations, and savings banks, it also promoted the establishment of isolation hospitals for the different infectious diseases. The same year saw the medical men of Manchester, which had just experienced a fever epidemic among the factory workers, constitute themselves into what amounted to the first board of public health. The closing year of the century brought a widespread propaganda in favour of inoculation. This interest in health and sanitation found general expression in parliamentary enactments which enabled the towns to improve their streets by laying pavements, erecting lamp posts, and collecting garbage. Between 1785 and 1800 two hundred and eleven such acts were passed. The beginnings of a building code appeared in provisions which compelled the use of brick for new construction.

These and other diverse achievements in thought and action supported the claim that the age was one of enlightenment, an enlightenment which Hannah More feared because it put out the light of the gospel but which *The Gentleman's Magazine* discounted because *An Astrological Catechism* could find a publisher. The enlightenment was one which saw man more as a rational being than as an immortal soul, although it hoped he was the latter, and emphasized the improvement of his earthly lot. The faith of the new age was that man could do something to relieve misery in all its forms, confusion as to methods notwithstanding. It was the nascent spirit of the Victorian age. The radiant promises of the free thinkers, the violent commands of the French Revolution, the softening emotionalism of romanticism, the fiats of the political economists, the abounding power of machines, and lastly the portending hopes of common men fused into a spirit which gave *naïveté* and its urbane companion, optimistic sobriety, a rampant freedom. But one feels that somehow there was lacking that gentle scepticism which moved Lord Chesterfield to write, "Every man seeks the truth, but God only knows who finds it." One feels also that the sense of humour was becoming blunt. At least no one spoke of reform after the manner of Dr Johnson, who remarked, "Why, Sir, most schemes of political improvement are very laughable things." At times the Doctor was prophetic. The new mood was serious, manners and elegancies counted for little, while sympathy

and emotional enthusiasm counted for much regardless of consequences Did not the Duke of Kent at Gibraltar drive his soldiers to mutiny by his ardour for temperance?

3 OLD CORNWALL

Cornwall was an old and famous county, known to the civilized world for both its sailors and its mines almost as long as Britain itself¹⁰ The museum at Truro prided itself on possessing a bar of tin which was said to date from Phoenician times The county had become one of the chief maritime centres of the kingdom in John's reign, but only since Tudor times, when Falmouth, Penzance, Fowey, and St Ives rose to prominence, had its sailors been glorious in war and notorious in piracy and smuggling The thickset, heavy-chested men of the Cornish coasts held their own as seamen, traders, and fighters against all rivals of Western Europe, including in particular the collectors of the King's customs Indeed, the spirit of the Cornish sailors was so vibrant and uncontrolled that their motto, "One and All," was for over a century the rallying cry of every mutinous crew in both the navy and the merchant service Perhaps our day can best catch this spirit by remembering that it provided Gilbert and Sullivan the inspiration for that air in *The Pirates of Penzance* to which slightly liquored college boys, boasting business men, and lesser American roisterers now sing, "Hail, hail, the gang's all here" The miners also were given to riot and outrage—they were wilder than the Scottish Highlanders—but, since their work was very unhealthful, they were sullen rather than exuberant in their disorderliness Together with the sailors they earned the county's reputation for being half civilized and its popular name, "West Barbary"

¹⁰ For details of life in eighteenth-century Cornwall see Nathaniel Spencer, *The Complete English Traveller, or a new survey and description of England and Wales* (London, 1771), C F A Wendeborn, *A View of England toward the close of the Eighteenth Century* (2 vols., London, 1791), Robert Fraser, *General View of the County of Cornwall with Observations on the means of its improvement* (London, 1794), William Marshall, *The Rural Economy of the West of England* (2 vols., London, 1796), George Lipscomb, *A Journey into Cornwall through the counties of Southampton, Wilts, Dorset, Somerset, and Devon Interspersed with remarks moral, historical, literary, and political* (Warwick, 1799), and Richard Warner, *A Tour through Cornwall in the Autumn of 1808* (Bath, 1809)

Although the climate—"that of lotus eaters"—was so mild that the palm, as well as the hardier apricot and apple, thrived, agriculture was falling into decay. The quick gains of commerce and mining, which due to the introduction of the steam engine for pumping had created a group of "mining squires," drew the people away from the land. In the lowlands were meadows and enclosures; woodlands covered the heads of the valleys, and the uplands and mountainous summits were deserted, no longer echoing with the rhythmic bawling of the herdsmen. The county was rapidly taking on a wild and "unornamented" aspect and, except for the mining districts and the seashore, was nearly uninhabited. Richard Polwhele, who mourned the passing of the older gentry both in verse and in prose—one suspects in prayer also, for he was an Anglican rector—declared that only one family kept up the mood and manner of the good old days, fifty years before. The devastation of the countryside, which was to be seen in ruined cottages, dismantled manor houses, decaying hamlets, and the disappearance of kneeling lovers, he explained as the work of "nabobs, miners, merchants, and so forth." Once the county had been relatively prosperous as a producer of cattle, but its acquaintance with riches was a new experience. During Humphry Davy's boyhood there was not a house in Penzance with a carpeted floor, nor was there a silver fork in the town. Polwhele complained that recently "tonish voluptuousness" had been engrafted upon "mulish rusticity."

But the rector was worried more by the loss of respect for rank and by the growth of the feeling of equality. The commercial spirit touched everything. The merely "old" lost its value. Great avenues of elms were cut down as protests against age and uniformity. The exotic became popular. Chinese mandarins in jade, lacquer, and porcelain graced the mantles which the nouveaux riches made the chief adornments of their homes. In minds alive with democratic sentiments and vigorous with the attitudes generated by piracy and sea life—love of adventure, disregard of authority, and eagerness for speculation—only a militant patriotism remained to fortify the old order against an immediate repudiation.

Tradition, of course, was a guarantee of its own survival. In spite of the new wealth, which decked out the rack-renting farmer's daughters in red morocco shoes and gay feathers and adorned the ladies of the new rich in the widest of hoop-skirts and such elaborate toilettes that the wearers often had headaches, much of the old

social life endured. Employers and employees still ate at the same table and joined in the same celebrations. As a boy Buckingham took the lead in the Christmas plays of St. George, the national saint. Clad in a white linen shirt—plaited, frilled, and decorated with gay rosettes—and armed with a lance, a javelin, a two-edged sword, a war-trumpet, and an oblong shield after the style of the Crusaders, the young adventurer led a troop of boys, twelve or fifteen in all, from door to door.¹¹ Except for the large number of followers this street drama was perhaps an augury of his future. Christmas had its carols, one, which he sang in a high treble voice, was particularly pleasing to feminine ears.

The first good joy our Mary had
 It was the joy of *one*,
 To see her own son Jesus
 Sucking at her breast bone¹²

Spring brought May Day, which sent the people, decked out with floral wreaths, about the county in gay processions, they ate, danced, and played with a holiday abandon such rustic games as drop the handkerchief and hide the slipper. On these occasions wrestlers—the boy Buckingham was a mighty one—vied for such prizes as gold-laced silk hats and small silver cows. Contests of physical strength were typical of the old rural culture. Market days also gave thrills. There were the odorous steamings from the hotel kitchen, the chaffering slack-jaw of fisherwomen clad in red coats and broad hats, buxom farmer wives with butter and eggs to sell, gossiping old folks, and the squire and his lady, who rode about in a carriage trailed by a troop of dirty children.

Liquor gave its cheer to all occasions. Among the farmers a dram was drunk both before and after breakfast. In polite society the brandy glass was emptied before dinner, after dinner, and at breaking company. At funerals each hymn was followed by a drink. When Buckingham's godfather died in 1794, the mourners went to an inn where, to the singing of religious hymns and patriotic anthems, the male members of the cortège got dead drunk. In later life Buckingham judged that at least thirty out of the fifty young men whom he had known had been ruined by intemperance.¹³

But these customs were not peculiar to Cornwall, they belonged

¹¹ *Autobiography*, I, 25

¹² *Ibid.*, 188

¹³ *Ibid.*, 32, 36.

to the common rural heritage of the nation ¹⁴ Not a Cornish heath nor a moor was without a witch or a conjuror Every well and tree had its sprite The turtledove was a sign of death The itching of the right eye meant good luck Stone Age fist hatchets, which were found in various parts of the county, were given the popular name "thunderbolts" and played a part in folk medicine "Boil'd dunder-bolt is a vine thing for rheumatiz" was an old man's testimony to the draughts which a hag of St Keverne brewed There were other treatments quite as efficacious Near Penzance was a well in which children were dipped, usually on the first three Sundays in May, to cure them of rickets Fortune-telling gypsies prospered The sight of a ghost was seriously reported in the newspapers And the saints and members of Parliament shared in the popular veneration All this was pleasing to the Reverend Polwhele, who argued, "If superstition is done away, in vulgar minds will religion expire"

Although the rationalism of Bolingbroke had poisoned the minds of the influential families so that many persons considered Christianity merely a fable, the common religious literature—Watt's *Hymns*, which Buckingham learned by heart, Nelson's *Fasts and Feasts*, and *The Book of Common Prayer*—was sufficiently orthodox to preserve the popular faith ¹⁵ But the Methodists were a serious menace to the Established Church Cornwall early became one of their chief centres of activity, John Wesley making no less than eighty visits to the county. His first arrival in Falmouth caused a riot in which he lost part of his clothing, after escaping, he exclaimed, "I never saw the hand of God so manifest as here" On his final visit in 1789 he was given a joyful reception The last two decades of the century brought the Methodists great success There was a revival in 1785, another in 1794, and the greatest of all in 1799, each was accompanied by the best brand of emotionalism

¹⁴ For intellectual currents in Cornwall see *British Museum Add MSS 28793*, Rev J Skinner, "Tour in Cornwall 1797-1798", Rev Richard Polwhele, *The Old English Gentleman, a Poem* (1797), *The Unsexed Female, a Poem* (1798), and *Anecdotes of Methodism, to which is added a sermon on the conduct that becomes a clergyman* (London, 1800), Samuel Drew, *Observations (In behalf of the Methodists) on A Pamphlet lately published by the Reverend R Polwhele entitled "Anecdotes of Methodism"* (Falmouth, 1800), *The Works of Francis Gregor* (Exeter, 1816), J H Drew, *The Life, Character, and Literary Labours of Samuel Drew, M A* (London, 1834), John Davy, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Humphry Davy* (2 vols, London, 1836), Francis Trevithick, *Life of Richard Trevithick, with an account of his Inventions* (London, 1872, and Captain Harry Carter (of Prussia Cove, 1749-1809), *The Autobiography of a Cornish Smuggler* (Truro, 1894).

¹⁵ *Autobiography*, I, 17.

Evangelists fought the Devil with ringing voices and flailing arms, children stole away from their parents to listen to the praying and wailing, sinners fled from "serpents and vipars, and the worst of venemest beasts" and "to their unspeakable joy" found the Lord, and contributions increased so that preachers could be kept in poor hamlets. Under these exciting conditions Samuel Drew, a self-taught craftsman, addressed a work entitled *Immortality and Immaterality of the Human Soul* to Paine and engaged in a battle of pamphlets with Polwhele over the proper conduct for preachers. Although Drew's learning won him recognition as a literary protagonist of Methodism, "certain unthinking persons" who disliked his liberties with theological terms accused him of heresy. Meanwhile Calvinistic doctrines were proscribed, and "the jumpers tried to catch Jesus Christ by the toes."

When Jacobinism made its way into the county, even penetrating to the mining hamlets, it brought the establishment of newspapers. Probably the first paper was *The Royal Cornish Gazette*, founded at Truro in 1801. The editor, Thomas Flindell, supported the Church and the Constitution, congratulated Drew for his work against Paine, and waged political controversies with a rival democratic paper, Edward Budd's *The West Briton*. Ultimately Flindell was forced to move to Exeter. Polwhele joined the anti-Jacobin forces and directed his attack upon Mary Wollstonecraft, who, he declared, was so immodest that she was opposed to blushes. In reply to the *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* he wrote a poem, *The Unsexed Female*. To him it was incomprehensible that modest females could study the sexual organs of plants, he was especially horrified at boys and girls studying botany together. Francis Gregor, the county's member of Parliament, not only opposed the French Revolution but also deplored all "large sweeping projects of undefined reform, projected and proposed by men who made appeals to tumultuous meetings."

But patriotism, not conservatism, stifled the democratic agitation. As the prospect of war brightened and then broke into the flame of conflict, Cornishmen joined volunteer regiments and drilled enthusiastically. In Falmouth they paraded daily, at night they burned Jacobins in effigy and sang patriotic songs in the street.

We'll bang the Spaniards, belabour the Dutch,
Bang the Spaniards, belabour the Dutch,
And block up and laugh at the French

The boys imitated their elders, for the chief commandments to English youths were "Be a good boy, love your mother, and hate the French." These precepts were completed by the advice "Now, my boy, if you meet six Frenchmen, run away, if there are three of them, lick them" Undoubtedly Buckingham, in command of his regiment of one hundred boys armed with wooden guns and pikes, felt able to whip all of the revolutionary armies. And he knew what was the desired fate for Robespierre Unfortunately, when the youthful commander attempted to blow up an effigy of the French leader, the gunpowder exploded in his face, burning off his hair and blackening the skin An application of common ink and several poultices of scraped potato saved his manly beauty¹⁶ His militant patriotism, as well as that of the community, was nourished by sentiments such as were engraved on the window of one of Falmouth's inns

I have seen the specious vain Frenchman, the trucking, scrub Dutchman, the tame low Dane, the sturdy self-righting Swede, the barbarous Russ, the turbulent Pole, the honest dull German, the pay-fighting Swiss, the subtle splendid Italian, the salacious Turk, the ever lounging, warring Maltese, the piratical Moor, the proud cruel Spaniard, the bigoted base Portuguese, with their countries, and hail again Old England, my Native Land!¹⁷

Beneath the excitement stimulated by Methodism, Jacobinism, and patriotism there was a quiet infiltration of new ideas Before the advent of newspapers two magazines, *The County Magazine* and *The Weekly Entertainer*,¹⁸ found a public in the county The former was the more liberal Among columns concerned with such modern topics as the virtues of coffee, the evil of lying in bed in the mornings, the pleasures of watering-places, the high price of beef, and Paris fashions, it found place to describe a visionary commonwealth of learning in which the spurious sciences were represented as the cause of man's original loss of happiness, to castigate the clergy for being class-conscious, to praise an improved comb which made it possible for a woman or child to clean six bushels of grain in a day and earn ninepence, to satirize the science of physiognomy,

¹⁶ *Autobiography*, I, 30

¹⁷ *The Naval Chronicle*, III (1800), 454.

¹⁸ *The County Magazine* for the years 1786 and 1787 containing a copious selection of what is valuable in Literature, Politics, and History, *The Weekly Entertainer, or, Agreeable and Instructive Repository* (For Cornwall and Devon), 1786.

to explain how tyranny in France had worked its own downfall by siding with America, and to exhibit a moral and physical thermometer which indicated the effects of water-drinking as health and wealth, those of small beer-drinking as happiness, and those of rum- and gin-drinking as burglary, suicide, madness, apoplexy, death, The Hulks, Botany Bay, and the gallows. At times its pages contained elevated discussions of philosophical subjects, for example, the irritability of vegetables. When reporting the fall of the Bastille, it burst into verse

Rejoice humanity, oppression chase
And let thy kindlier nature take its place

The Weekly Entertainer was the more practical. Among anecdotes of Peter the Great, descriptions of freaks, and an account of finding a skeleton, its pages offered a recipe for taking stains out of linen and another for making a cheap family soup. It balanced a justification of capital punishment with a poem entitled "A Hymn to Benevolence" and "warmly commended" the "noble sentiments" spoken by Monsieur Moreau de Merry in the Estates General, October 5, 1789. "Sire, you have only to remember this powerful truth that the thrones of kings can never be firmly fixed, unless they have for their base the love and fidelity of the people—then they are impregnable." A sonnet to "Tranquillity" pronounced its general attitude toward life and public affairs.

That general renovation of English life which was being brought about by contacts with the overseas world was particularly evident in Cornwall. America attracted some attention, but a much greater interest was taken in Eastern countries, especially India and China. The prevailing notion of a desirable improvement to an estate was a Chinese pagoda with an East India entrance and an umbrella door. The Chinese fashion of vegetable statuary was also popular. One old nobleman attempted to work out the story of Adam and Eve in the medium of plants but gave it up after failing to fix the apple in the serpent's mouth. Buckingham's earliest notions of the East were secured from gazing at a folding screen upon which was pictured the ruins of Baalbeck and Palmyra, long hours of poring over Calmet's *Dictionary of the Bible* deepened the original impression, to which a note of terror was added by the sight of three Egyptian jackals in a travelling menagerie.¹⁹ Cornwall looked to

¹⁹ *Autobiography*, I, 54, II, 201

the sea, and Buckingham as a mere child longed to visit foreign lands. The world-wide economic contacts which gave the county's people new riches and strange goods gave them also the spirit to break with tradition.

By and large, Cornwall was changing as the world was changing. Its people attended to the new improvements and adopted those which were successful. In accepting inoculation as a defence against smallpox, less prejudice was manifested, as well as a more progressive spirit displayed, than was usual throughout the kingdom.

Truro, the cathedral city and cultural centre of the county, was a progressive town, its shops were remarkable for possessing windows. In 1792 a literary and philosophical institution and a county library were opened. Two years later such modern improvements as paving, street-lighting, and level footways for pedestrians were made, and a cobble-stone road to Falmouth, eight miles away, was built. A theatre, an amateur concert association, a county infirmary, and grammar schools also were established. No doubt it was improvements such as these that moved an old Whig to protest against the innovating character of the age.

Falmouth was the commercial metropolis of the county and England's leading port in the West.²⁰ In the sixteenth century when Sir Walter Raleigh, after the unsuccessful expedition to Guiana, found refuge in its harbour, the town was only a quay and an inn with the significant name "Penny Come Quick." Charles II gave the town its modern name, and about 1688, when the packet service was established, the port began the growth which culminated in the prosperity and prestige of the late eighteenth century.

A glance at the map shows the geographical position which contributed to Falmouth's advantage. It was the last port to be touched when leaving England for overseas and the first to be entered on the homeward voyage. Masters and supercargoes found it a convenient place to land for final instructions. In war time ships from Bristol, Liverpool, and Greenock gathered in the harbour to form convoys. The harbour, landlocked behind hills and large

²⁰ For materials on Falmouth see *Articles of Agreement entered into by the Town and Parish of Falmouth Association for the prosecution of thieves, etc* (Falmouth, 1788), *A Falmouth Guide, containing a concise account of the history, trade, port, and public establishments of Falmouth* 1815, J. Philip, *A Panorama of Falmouth, containing a history of the origin, progress, and present state of the port, particularly of the packet and other establishments* (London, 1827), and Susan E. Gay, *Old Falmouth* (London, 1903).

enough to float the royal navy, was the safest in all England. Except in a heavy easterly wind ships found little danger in clearing and, what was more important, could enter at any time, even at night or in a fog. But the defences were poor. Two sixteenth-century castles, Pendennis on the higher eminence at the west of the harbour's entrance and St Mawes opposite, were antiquated. The town was at the mouth of King's Creek, which formed the inner harbour.

Timber, rice, and grain from America, gin and cheese from Holland, naval supplies from Scandinavia, fruits, wines, spices, brandy, and wool from Spain and Portugal, flour, salt, and lace from France, hides and wool from South America, as well as cotton and sugar from the West Indies, came to Falmouth's wharves. In return pilchards—pickled, pressed, and in oils—went to Italy, Russia, and the West Indies. Tin, tin plate, iron, and copper accompanied the fish to Russia and Italy, sometimes going on even to Turkey. Game-cocks—fighting Cornish fowls—found destinations in the sporting circles of the West Indies. The Iberian ports called for manufactured goods, such as stationery, cloth, and porter. A monopoly of the tobacco trade for Cornwall and Devon, together with the coastwise commerce in which London exchanged groceries and ship supplies for the coal, iron, earthenware, and salt from Liverpool and the west coast, completed the town's regular traffic.

But illegal trading was even more important than legitimate commerce, for Falmouth sheltered Cornwall's boldest smugglers. Although the town had always been famous for such trafficking—even the sixteenth-century innkeeper had been suspected of the crime—the late eighteenth century saw the business at its height. In 1770, when a smuggler was chosen mayor, his confederates grew so daring that they raided and captured the King's revenue cutters. By 1800 nearly every man, woman, and child in the town, except the revenue collectors, who wore "fog-spectacles and bank-paper glasses," was engaged in commercial enterprises of questionable legality. The general practice of the runners was to meet East Indiamen as they came up the Channel, pay cash for silks, muslin, tea, spirits, and costly Oriental wares, and sneak their purchases into some cove under the cover of night, the contraband was hurried inland on the backs of donkeys hired from farmers and finally concealed in some secret place, usually a cave, but sometimes an excavation beneath the floor of a church or a room hidden behind a great fireplace. The disposal of the goods was carried on

systematically by commercial travellers to the inland towns. It was an honourable traffic. Women were particularly ingenious in all the tricks of the trade, those known as "troachers" hawked wares from house to house. The revenue collectors estimated that as much brandy and rum were smuggled into Cornwall, Devon, and Dorset as entered the port of London, and that the uncollected duties at Falmouth were twice as great as the land-tax of the entire county. Cornwall enjoyed its "port" at half the London price.

Probably young Buckingham many times saw—and admired as often—John Carter, "King of Prussia," the most successful and notorious smuggler of the south Cornish coast. The boy attended an excellent school for teaching the practice, if not the theory, of free trade.

The importance of the town was founded not upon trade but upon the packets which kept England in contact with the Mediterranean and colonial world.²¹ The news for which all England waited was known first at Falmouth. Originally the boats had run only to Corunna in Spain, but the service grew rapidly. By 1705 there were five boats to the West Indies, by 1709 five to Lisbon, and by 1764 they were running to the chief American ports. In the 1790's the service was at its height, with thirty or forty vessels sailing regularly to Portugal, Spain, the West Indies, and America.

Although the packets were privately owned and operated, the government required them to be of special design, built for speed instead of fighting. In 1793 the regulations called for a three-masted vessel of 179 tons burthen, manned by a crew of twenty-eight men, and armed with four four-pounders, two six-pounders, and small-arms. The commanders were under orders not to fight except as a last resort. "You must run when you can, you must fight when you can no longer run, and when you can fight no more, you must sink the mails before you strike." When the packets carried brass nine-pounders, they had been a match for their peculiar enemies, the French privateers, and enjoyed a reputation for hard fighting. But the new armament left them at the mercy of their swifter foes, and after the outbreak of war in 1793 a series of disasters befell the service.

The excitement of life on the packets was transferred to the

²¹ For the general history of the Falmouth packets see Arthur H. Norway, *History of the Post Office Packet Service, between the years 1792-1815, compiled from records, chiefly official* (London, 1895).

people of the town, most of whom worked at " 'tendin' boats " The town also welcomed the sailors, their spending, and that spirit which only sailors know how to put into spending And they had plenty of money Every sailor and commander on the packets was a trader, carrying his own venture to his ship's port of call Often the captains made as much as two thousand pounds on a single voyage The most profitable ventures were in the West India service It was the common practice to insure goods for both the outward and return voyages In the West Indies the original cargoes were sold, but new articles were not purchased, instead, when the ship returned, a claim that a privateer had seized the goods was placed with the insurance company, which had to pay for the loss By this fraudulent practice profits were easily doubled

The packets gave Falmouth contact not only with Mediterranean countries and the overseas world but also with London Long before the first mail coach bowled northward to Liverpool and Edinburgh, Russell's fly-wagons, drawn by six or eight horses at the snail's pace of two or three miles an hour and guarded by a troop of soldiers, hauled mail and bullion between the metropolis and the Cornish port Falmouth was close to the centre of the world

Only a naval force was needed to complete the port's life, and it came with the French war In 1794 Sir Edward Pellew made the harbour the base of operation for a squadron of five frigates Then came French prizes, and two large prisons were built to shelter the prisoners of war At the same time a hospital for English sailors was opened During the winter of 1805 Lord Cornwallis frequented the harbour with five or six heavy vessels The response of the townsmen to naval prominence was an intensified patriotism, especially when Napoleon scared all England with a threat of invasion

With trade, smuggling, the packets, and the navy not one of the town's six-thousand-odd inhabitants—"either birds of passage or birds of prey"—escaped the excitement and bustle of the quays and harbour. One-fourth of the population were transient sailors, who lived for the day's delights, not quite half of the population were women, and each was either happy to have her man home again or anxious for his return, provided that she had not forgotten him for a new lover The town could not boast of cleanliness, let alone elegance, nor of great wealth, the shipowners and the wealthier merchants, mostly Quakers, lived on the north bank of King's

Creek in the little village of Flushing. But Falmouth could match any town in England for spirit and variety. Seamen and commercial agents from all parts of Europe, British sailors from the warships—in striped frocks and flowing trousers during the summer, in blue jackets and trousers with red waistcoats during the winter—even better clad men from the packets, and the roistering labourers of the quay filled the town's inns and its one street with din and hilarity.

The inns were the centres of the excitement. Wynne's Hotel, where no doubt the engraved window spoke its ringing patriotism, was always in a hubbub.

Doors opening and shutting, bells ringing, voices calling to the waiter from every quarter, while he cries "coming" to one room, and hurries away to another. The man who cleans boots is running in one direction, the barber with his powder bag in another, here goes the barber's boy with his hot water and razors, there comes clean linen from the washerwomen, and the hall is full of porters and sailors bringing up luggage, or bearing it away.²²

The bars and the tippling houses were the chief amusement centres, but billiard-rooms, the theatre in Killegrew Street where comedians played, and the bowling green on the hill behind the church offered variety to those seeking entertainment. Private dances and parties were frequent, hardly an evening passed without three or four such assemblies gathering. And marriages, almost weekly in occurrence, added to the general gaiety. But there were discordant elements in the general scene. The poor lived on the offal of the fishing industry, thieves lurked in the dark corners, and the cobble-stones in the street along which the town's six hundred houses faced for nearly a mile were so sharp that natural declivities and bumps added little to its roughness.

Falmouth had one more claim to distinction among all the towns of the kingdom. It contained a greater diversity of religious sects than any other. Beside the Established Church and the chief non-conformist groups, the Quakers, the Independents, the Baptists, and the Methodists, there were Unitarians, Jews, and Roman Catholics. And each sect had its appropriate structure and ministrant. No better evidence of the town's prosperity exists than the fact that each congregation either built or remodelled its edifice.

²² Don Espirella. (Robert Southey), *Letters from England* (2nd ed., 3 vols., London, 1808), I, 6.

between 1780 and 1806, the year Buckingham left the town Most remarkable of all, the sects lived in harmony

Nor was the town a laggard in making civic improvements and in setting up humanitarian establishments Fires in 1781, 1788, and 1792 destroyed different sections of its one street and opened the way for better buildings In 1785 a new customs house was constructed, five years later a church tower with a clock was raised As early as 1752 a Merchants' Hospital had been opened for the relief of incapacitated seamen and sailors' widows and orphans Sunday schools appeared in 1792 The first year of the new century brought the organization of the Misericordia Society to aid poor strangers A year later the town's first newspaper, *The Packet*, was founded In 1802 the Established Church opened a charity school for girls and two years later one for boys In 1806 a public dispensary for the relief of the industrious but afflicted poor was established Humanitarian sentiment also allowed a negro ex-slave a place in the town's better society

Old Falmouth intrigues the imagination! One desires to linger in its inns, to pace its ugly street, to survey its busy quays, to view the ships, trim and ready in the harbour, to climb the hill where the watch scanned the south and west for home-returning sails, above all to catch its spirit—long since dead, writhed in steam and smoke—a spirit of the seas and seafaring men, compounded of anxiety and unbounded hopes, of courage, of defiance, of license, of gaiety and hilarity, of adventure and freedom England waited on the harbour for news beyond the seas, the world crossed its wharves, and men of many races and faiths found in its life a brotherly spirit—in the sharpness of its dealings, in the toleration of its judgments, and in the charity of its humanity

4. SAILOR BOY

The sea calls, the sea is cruel Beneath its endlessly forming waves there are depths for all of man's Utopias and for those greater dreams each man calls his own. In Falmouth grand projects were shaped with ease and as easily succeeded by still grander projects; it was a vantage point from which the world appeared to be given to man for roaming and fortune-hunting The sea calls, the sea is bountiful

Buckingham's family had heard the call for centuries. One of its members had fought with Drake and Howard against the Spanish menace. Another had drowned at the time of the sad but heroic sinking of the *Thunderer*. But Christopher Buckingham, the father of James Silk, knew its bounty. In a cocked hat, long square-tailed coat, knee breeches, and square-toed shoes with silver buckles, he was a fine representative of the merchant service of the early days of George III. At the time of James Silk's birth the father retained the uniform, but he had left the sea, having retired with a fortune to the land, where he set up as a farmer. One hesitates at the name "Silk." It is unique, perhaps suggestive—of an East Indiaman, a fog or a dark night, a quick dash out of a secret cove and as quick a rush inland with goods that were rare, beautiful, and highly profitable. One wonders about the branch of the merchant service to which the father belonged, at least the son never condemned smuggling, even though, through no fault of his own, it cost the loss of his inheritance.²³

James Silk was the youngest of seven children. Two brothers were in the merchant service, one as an interpreter. His eldest sister had married an officer in the packet service, and three other sisters were at home to help the mother combat the youngest son's desire to follow his older brothers to sea. The family lived in Flushing, where the house stood at the water's edge. When the tide was in, it was a short drop from the boy's window to the water twelve feet below. The sea was in his blood, in his ears, and in his dreams. The mother struggled against fate.

His earliest recollections were of afternoons spent in the harbour with his father, who taught him to hold the rudder. Before his sixth year he had learned to handle a sail and dared to take a boat out alone. Once he steered his father's boat to victory in a race, on another occasion he capsized and was brought home, wrapped in a wet sail and given up for dead. Only the timely aid of a naval surgeon, who put hot bricks at his feet, rolled his body in salt, and drained his stomach with emetics, saved his life. He first saw the sea from the Manacles, a height above the harbour, and then and there was born his determination to be a sailor. After the warships came, his father, who was friendly with Sir Edward Pellew, often took him on board the *Indefatigable*, and Pellew promised to make

²³ This account of Buckingham's early life is based upon his *Autobiography*, I, Chapters I-X.

him a midshipman when he got older. It was the romance of sea-life that caught the boy's fancy. Falconer's *The Shipwreck* seized his imagination, and Dibdin's sea songs were music to his soul.

The wind and rain, the inconstant main,
My ardent passion prove,
Lashed to the helm, should seas o'erwhelm
I'll think on thee, my love

Perhaps this verse also reminded the boy of his first sweetheart. When she died suddenly his grief was uncontrollable, and he wept an entire night on her grave. Not all his romance was for the sea, at the tender age of eight neither love nor sea, alike inconstant, had any terrors for him.

Meanwhile he had spent his seventh year in a boys' school at Hubbarton, twelve miles inland from Plymouth, where he had been sent in an attempt to counteract his passion for the sea. But the hardships of life in the school only made the sailor's existence seem more attractive. And little wonder, for the food was so coarse and scanty that the boys raided the pantries at night, not from mischief but from hunger. The forays also afforded relief from the hard and crowded beds. As a playground the boys used an old graveyard, where they engaged in mock warfare, from which victors and vanquished alike emerged with bloody noses, black eyes, and torn clothing. When a misdemeanour was found out, the guilty boy was punished by being compelled to memorize the longest chapters in the Bible, a form of discipline which developed little reverence for the sacred book. Even in his last years Buckingham considered the experiences in this school the most painful of his entire life. The death of his father brought him home, and he greeted freedom as if he had escaped from the Bastille.

Back in Flushing he was sent to a Dame's School, where, after learning to read and write, he devoured all the books that came his way, such as *The History of Primrose Goodyface* and *Goody Two-Shoes*, and wrote epistles after the manner of Hannah More, who just then was at the height of her popularity. He liked school, but he loved the sea. The thousand appeals of the harbour, which came to him directly from his brothers and sisters or indirectly from the servants, whose letters from lovers at sea he often read and usually answered, lured him away from books. Faced with the inevitable, the family decided to allow him to go to sea, but first he must learn

navigation by attending Duckham's Naval Academy, which overlooked Falmouth and the harbour from a neighbouring hill. He mastered the use of nautical instruments and logarithms in three months. Not only was there romance in Buckingham, but also was there ability for close application. After the examinations came the ritual of marking him with the symbol of the sailor's profession—a needle made bloody pricks in the palm of his left hand, gunpowder was rubbed into the minute wounds, the hand closed and opened, and there in the flesh was the indelible mark of the seaman—the blue anchor. The boy was not yet ten years old.

Little did the efforts of his mother and the neighbouring rector to interest him in religious work matter now, nor did he care that the family was sending him to sea in order that experience with its cruelties might break his desire to be a sailor. Thickset, with ruddy cheeks, blue eyes, and wavy hair, he was a fine specimen of Cornish youth. Although he was only ten years old, he was as large as a boy of fifteen. He was adept at going hand over hand from the main deck to the main topsail and could swim two miles. He went to sea on the *Lady Harriet*, a trim mail packet, bound for Lisbon, his sister's husband was the sailing-master.

Except for illicit trading with the Portuguese and the sights of Lisbon, the voyage was uneventful. From the greatest to the least—if the captain had goods worth five thousand pounds, Buckingham had some worth fifty pounds—the sailors were smugglers. The British officials winked at the trade, and the Portuguese revenue collectors connived at its success. As soon as night fell along the water-front and the banks of the Tagus, alarm guns sounded, cannon and muskets flashed, the government boats chased fleeing smugglers and trapped some of them in the river. In the morning the newspapers described the forays in lurid colours and praised the officials for their vigilance. Meanwhile the smugglers, the officials, and the publishers divided the profits of the night's commerce. The harbour, gay with the flags of all nations, the massive and stately buildings, and the ever-pealing church bells were new wonders to the boy, who knew only Falmouth and its ugly street. But on going ashore he discovered the narrow and dirty alleyways and cluttered squares to be a decided contrast to the grand prospect of the city as seen from the ship, only the gaudy costumes of the people and the wares of the itinerant vendors of ices pleased him. He was still a boy.

The first voyage was a success for James Silk—but a disappointment to his family because he was not cured of his love for the sea. On the contrary its appeal had increased, and he re-embarked at once.

* The second voyage was little more than a repetition of the first. A wag among the sailors teased the boy about his prowess as a wrestler and challenged him to meet a certain Antonio Calcavella, who lived on Lisbon's water-front. Upon reaching port the sailor took the boy for a walk among the warehouses, and, after sampling the contents of many wine casks, Buckingham fell down dead drunk. When he came to, he was greeted by the boisterous laughter of the sailor, who quickly informed him that his rival had won, for Calcavella was nothing more than a famous Portuguese wine. As usual trade was brisk. By promises of fine bargains the sailors lured on board a Portuguese who owed them money and subjected him to the rough treatment of being lashed to the hawser which held the main anchor until he promised to send ashore for the required sum. The unfortunate debtor complied with the demand and, since he was in fear of being drowned or crushed to death, was more than generous with coins. One other experience greatly impressed the young sailor. The royal barge was frequently rowed about the harbour, and the queen, surrounded by beautiful maidens and gracious courtiers, reminded him of Cleopatra going to meet Antony. The songs which the rowers chanted were proof that licentious pleasures were not unknown to those who enjoyed the queen's hospitality. He discovered also that the English sailors were familiar with the less regal dens of vice which were to be found along the quays. He was becoming a man.

But the good luck of his first two voyages did not last for the third, it was one long series of disasters, unbroken except by the boy's discovery that females have tender passions. Off Cape Finisterre the *Lady Harriet* was captured by a swift-sailing French privateer, partly manned by English mutineers, who were not kindly disposed toward patriotic Englishmen. The prisoners were confined in the hold, battened down and guarded by sailors with naked swords. To make matters worse the water supply was so low that only a half-pint a day was allowed to each person.

Several days after the capture of the packet the privateer put into the Spanish port of Corunna, where to the strident rhythm of "The Marseillaise" the prisoners were sent ashore to be incarcerated.

in an old Spanish barrack Strict cleanliness was enforced in the prison, but the food served by the Spanish authorities was so stinted in quantity and so abominable in quality that the men soon found the addition of soup, stews, and ragouts made from dogs, cats, and even rats to be far from unpalatable

The clear complexion, rosy cheeks, light-blue eyes, and curly brown hair of the youngest prisoner caught the fancy of the prison-keeper's daughter, whose dark Spanish beauty was in turn not unattractive to the object of her passion That they were only ten years old mattered little, for Spanish girls matured young, and he was large for his age "My tender-hearted Isabella Dolores," as he came to call her, supplied him with delicate food from her father's table and found a hundred occasions, quite unknown to her parents, to speak to him and only a few less opportunities to lead him out of the enclosure into quiet passages, where caresses and kisses united them in ardent embraces He understood little Spanish and she less English, but he was a sailor and she a woman, and these two have ever known a universal language At length the fascinated señorita devised a plan of escape and proposed to flee with him, but he recognized the futility of such an elopement and temporized with her as best he could Thus months passed, and her ardour for the English Adonis did not cool

But, as in all cases of true love, trouble came at last, in this instance the Spanish government decided to liberate the prisoners on condition that they march to Lisbon When this news reached the pretty ears of Isabella Dolores she fainted, much to the dismay of her parents, who immediately demanded an explanation. They heard the truth with not a little consternation but forgave all when they realized that "no evil consequences were now likely to ensue" Indeed the mother showed considerable kindness to Buckingham Because they were making the journey to Lisbon on foot, the prisoners were obliged to sell all their belongings except the clothes they wore Buckingham had some books, a few nautical instruments, and several uniforms, for which he was offered only five Spanish dollars Learning of this ridiculous offer, Isabella's mother intervened in the dickering with a magnificent burst of Spanish profanity, putting the dealer to shame, taking the goods herself, and giving the boy several gold pistoles and half-pistoles The daughter promptly showed her gratitude by bursting into tears The two lovers had privately embraced and said good-bye, but at the final

moment of parting the boy, after the Spanish custom, was allowed to kiss the girl's hand, and his heart was as heavy as her own, because there was no " 'hope of return,' which is said to 'take the sting from adieu ' " Thus passed his second sweetheart

James Silk was now to make the first of his many overland journeys, some much more dangerous but none more interesting than this march to Lisbon The troop, consisting of about fifty men, another boy, and a guard of twenty soldiers, set out for Santiago de Compostella In contrast to the soft contours of the English landscape the rugged country of Northern Spain had a powerful and massive beauty The great number of priests, whom they saw everywhere, and the cries of "*hereticos*," which greeted them wherever the party met Spaniards, made Buckingham feel that England was almost without religion The troop marched no more than fifteen miles a day At night they bivouacked or slept in a stable They drank snow water from the streams and ate little enough, for the Spanish authorities allowed each prisoner only two shillings for each hundred miles of the march When Buckingham fell behind, hungry and weary, the boatswain of the *Lady Harriet* tied a rope around his waist and pulled him along From the capital of Galicia they went on to Vigo, where they met some Spaniards recently returned from England in an exchange of prisoners, these Spaniards were so grateful that they insisted on giving the marchers a banquet, saying that "seamen were brothers all the world over " But, as a result of mixing brandy with their wine, the English got drunk and forgot what little brotherly love hunger had aroused in them, only the intervention of the guards saved the guests and their hosts from a nasty brawl At Oporto, in spite of the fact that the harbour was filled with English ships, not a captain would give the prisoners a passage home They continued the march by way of Coimbra to Abrantes, where they embarked on barges to float a hundred miles down to Lisbon The last days of the journey were passed in "the luxury of perfect idleness "

The sailors' joy upon seeing Lisbon again was short-lived, for, as they pulled up to the wharf, Sir John Jarvis, with a British fleet—"shattered hulls, broken masts, and fluttering rags"—recently victorious over the Spanish and French off Cape St Vincent, sailed up the harbour. That night George III's press-gangs raided the lanes and alleys of the Portuguese capital, seeking all the Englishmen that could be found, and among these were most of the newly

liberated prisoners of war. They were beaten, handcuffed, and rededicated to Mars and the glory of the British Empire. In the midst of the raid James Silk ran up an open stairway, where two labouring women, recognizing his youth and sensing his terror, kindly hid him in an attic bedroom and fed him for three days. A week later he obtained a berth on the packet, *Prince of Wales*, whose captain knew him, and in a short while he was again in the "bosom of his family."

After these experiences the eleven-year-old sailor listened to the pleadings of his mother and sisters and promised never to go to sea while his mother lived. But he did not retire completely from the seafaring profession. In 1798 he went to Devonport, a village near Plymouth, to work for a dealer in nautical instruments. He spent three years in the shop. He read widely in books of travel and biography. *The Naval Chronicle* was just to his taste: from its pages he learned about Tyre and Carthage and Venice and England's more recent naval exploits. He also discovered that philosophical and literary articles were interesting, and he mastered the printer's craft. This shop with its compasses and telescopes and its maps, books, and magazines was Buckingham's university, and, if his subsequent career is considered, he graduated with honours.

The boy craved excitement, and Plymouth harbour gave it. Vessels of every description came into the port, Lord Nelson and Lord Exmouth, formerly Sir Edward Pellew in command of the Falmouth squadron, brought the warships and their sailors, whose reckless pleasures ashore fascinated the boy. On one occasion he attended a banquet graced by the presence of the great naval commanders.

But he found the theatre even more attractive than ships. He frequented the performances, lingered back stage, and became fired with ambition to write a play. After reading Shakespeare and Ben Jonson and recent authors, such as Otway and Mrs Inchbald, he set to work on a drama after the style of Kotzebue, whose sentimental pieces were then the rage. He worked daily for three months, often until after midnight, and created *The Conquest of Circassia*, a five-act play of Asiatic intrigue and warfare in blank verse, with many characters beside the hero and heroine. He gave the composition to the manager of the local theatre, who after keeping it several months returned it with the declaration that only a rich London company could do justice to its scenery and costumes. Ultimately the

play was destroyed, a fortunate event in the author's later judgment.

Disappointment at the failure of his literary career was quickly submerged in a new enthusiasm, he turned to religion and began to preach. When a mere child, at the time of the Methodist revival of 1794, he had undergone the rigors of conversion, of which experience he recorded that he never felt anything "more exquisitely delicious than this ecstatic elevation above earthly things." Undoubtedly he was among those converts who left the meetings with beaming faces, shouting, "Hosanna to the Lord." Nor was his childish piety in vain. In 1795 when starving miners raided Falmouth intent upon seizing grain and flour, he calmed the invaders, who were devout followers of Wesley, by climbing on a pile of sacks and singing in a high soprano voice

Salvation! oh! the joyful sound,
'Tis music to our ears,
A sovereign balm for every wound,
A cordial to our fears

The miners, recalled to their faith, stood with bared heads and then slunk away. The adolescent boy found the occasion for the return to religious devotion in a sermon, "The Prodigal Son," which brought him to realize the indulgence of his mother and impelled him to repent his frivolities. He gave up the gay life of the inns and theatres, resorted to the libraries of the two local ministers, and read the Bible and controversial works of theology. He liked especially the burning words of Jonathan Edwards and became a strict Calvinist. When Amos Reece, a local divine, became ill, the boy interpreted the event as his call to the ministry—"an occurrence decreed, like every other, from all eternity." He ascended Reece's pulpit and spoke on the tenth chapter of Paul's Epistles to the Romans. But, like his other enthusiasms, the fervour of faith calmed, and in a few months he was again a frivolous youth about Devonport.

Released from one emotion he was quickly caught up by another—the patriotic outburst which greeted Napoleon's threat of invasion—and joined the navy. He was overgrown for his sixteen years and was accepted by the authorities without a question. But he soon had occasion to need his faith in election to salvation and to regret his rash departure from the instrument shop. The commonplaces of life on the warship were in sharp contrast to the boy's romantic picture of naval glories. He ate hard bread and salt biscuit,

with raisins boiled in flour for a weekly dessert He was "started" with a rope's end, he saw the execution of a mutineer by hanging from the yardarm of the flagship, and to cap it all he was forced to witness the horrible spectacle of the flogging of a deserter around the fleet Thus his patriotism was quickly dissipated, and the Empire lost another nameless hero On the day before the fleet sailed, when he was left in charge of a small ship-boat in Mutton Cove, he slipped away into the back country around Torpoint

He slept in a haystack the first night and was awakened in the morning by a farmer boy, who nearly scared him to death But the farmer boy and his family were kind to the runaway They took his uniform and gave him a rustic costume, consisting of rough trousers, a smock, hobnailed shoes, and a coarse felt hat, and thus attired he set out by way of St Austell, Truro, and Penryn for home When he encountered a searching party out for deserters, fear quaked in his bones, but the country clothes and a broad Cornish dialect saved him He reached his mother's house at night, only to be refused admittance by the servants who did not recognize him But his sisters and mother received him with open arms, and after three days spent in bed, while the village tailor made him new clothes, he renewed the life of the prodigal son

By coaxing and petting, his mother prevailed upon him to enter the office of Falmouth's leading lawyer, the town's magnate and the father of several lovely daughters But not even these inducements were sufficient to hold the boy to his studies, the verbiage of the law and the trickery of its votaries were repugnant to him They seemed to promote nothing but feasting and carousing at the expense of litigants In 1804 he gave up the law, returning to a life of freedom without any occupation or prospects Under these easy circumstances he cultivated the arts and other gentle modes of enjoying life From Eimée, a negro musician who had married an Englishwoman and begotten six children, he learned to play the flute, an accomplishment he valued because it recommended him to female society, of which he was fond and growing fonder To satisfy his desire for the life of the sea, he went on board a revenue cutter commanded by a suitor for the hand of one of his sisters The suitor and his guest pursued smugglers about the coves of South Cornwall, enjoyed the female society of Penzance, touched the Scilly Isles, and ended the cruise at Milford Haven, where the guest tried his hand at marine painting The newly acquired musical

skill opened female hearts to him, and he left his own behind at every port. At the same time he absorbed the best brand of English patriotism, which declared George III a paragon among monarchs, Pitt a heaven-born minister, the Americans Yankee rebels, and the French a frog-eating, wooden-shoe-wearing, dancing, and capering set of Jacobins.

This gay life was brought to a sudden end by the death of his mother. The old lady, whom he remembered not only for her kindness and tender indulgence but also for her fine features and her costume—a stiff quilted satin petticoat, dress open at the front to display a rich lace apron beneath, a stately stomacher, and a high cap—had done her best to guide her youngest son into a secure profession. He grieved at her death by shutting himself away from society. But after a month “that natural elasticity of youth” brought him to normal spirits and the usual life of idleness.

Under these circumstances it was inevitable that a youth of his tendencies should fall in love, and he found in Elizabeth Jennings, the daughter of a neighbouring farmer who looked more to improvements than to profits, the sweetheart of his life.

No year has yet elapsed, that saw our fondness less,
Or interposed indifference, to check Love's sweet caress.

They fell in love at first sight and were married at Gluvias in February, 1806. He was not yet twenty, she was a few months older.

5 DISASTERS

The year 1806 was a bitter one for Britain, early in January she mourned the death of Nelson, shortly after that of Pitt, and somewhat later still that of Fox. Little did the organization of a “ministry of all talents” compensate of the loss of the amorous admiral, the port-drinking premier, and the carelessly dressed minister. England had need of all Perceval’s devoutness, for Napoleon, having humbled Austria and reduced Prussia, was ready for the grand play with the dominion of the world as the stake. The first card in the new game was the Berlin Decree, which closed European ports to English commerce and started the commercial decline of Falmouth.

The year also brought disaster to Buckingham. His father’s estate of lands, mining-stock, and fishery interests had been left

in the hands of trustees, one of whom, in the broad style of Cornwall, hatched a scheme to enrich himself. The project was nothing less than the purchase of the entire cargo of a Swedish East Indiaman and the smuggling of the goods into England. How much young Buckingham knew about the scheme cannot be discovered, but he knew enough to record that the venture, if it had been successful, would have made a profit of 100 per cent. Unfortunately the vigilance of the revenue officers frustrated the bold enterprise and left the trustees, as well as Buckingham, penniless. Thus without the least warning, at the very moment when the happiness of marriage was new and sweetest, and when he was looking forward to a quiet life in Falmouth as the proprietor of a nautical instrument shop and printing office, he was hurled into the depths of despair. He was without money, occupation, or profession, and his wife had just given birth to a daughter.

Certainly he was not the first man with a family to face the world penniless, nor would he be the last, but he is one of the few to have evaluated his youth as it had equipped him for a subsequent career. He considered the main tendencies of his character to be four—the enterprising, the devotional, the sympathizing, and the amatory.²⁴ No one can deny that he was a bold and original enterpriser in his own affairs and also in those of the world. His religion was personal, nourished by meditation on the Psalms, the Book of Job—he had cause to appreciate the plight of the afflicted righteous man—and the New Testament. Nor was it in vain that as a child he had wept at the simple tragedy of *The Babes in the Wood* and had followed the example of his father in giving pennies to the poor, his sympathizing nature, once it caught the spirit of reform, wove about the tangled threads of defunct enterprises and continuous misadventures a fabric of worthwhile efforts and achievements. And unquestionably he loved, both ardently and faithfully, not even ten years' separation from his wife nor repeated financial misfortune broke the romance which was sealed at Gluvias.

In 1806 the world waited for it knew not what. Reaction and reform alike were in the wings, the adventurer strutted about the stage. The greatest adventurer of them all held Europe in the hollow of his hand—and grasped for the world. In America a lesser intriguer had visions of an empire where Montezuma once held sway. And Buckingham went to sea.

²⁴ *Autobiography*, I, 52.

CHAPTER II

YARNS AND ARGOSIES

I. FO'C'SLE MEN

WHEN Buckingham separated from his wife and baby and worked his way to London as a common sailor, he began a return to the sea which was to fill the greater part of a decade, to carry him halfway around the world, and to make him later in life the leading advocate of reforms for sailors. He was not long in encountering the perils which, afloat and ashore, beset them. The passage up the Channel was stormy, and at Dover, where he planned to take the stage, the ship-hotel charged him so much for bed and breakfast that he had no money left to pay the fare, he had to walk over fifty miles to London. His interest in marine reforms was based upon something more substantial than vague humanitarian feelings, he knew the sea and its men.

The packets, upon which he had acquired an experience of the sea, were among the best ships afloat, but some idea of the conditions under which common sailors lived can be gained from a sketch of the dietary practices aboard them. Every week each man was given six pounds of the coarsest kind of beef and pork. The beef was like that cured for the West India negroes, and the pork, even worse, was pickled and barrelled with ringed snouts and hocks covered with hair all thrown in together. And the bread, no different from that on other vessels, was as hard as flint. Frequently the men were poisoned by eating spoiled food. Only the sailors' word—"mess"—can describe the rations of ordinary seamen, it was no marvel that they prized the daily allowance of a half-pint of gin.

To these well-known privations and common miseries of seafaring life were added the fiercer pains of discipline. Captains followed to the letter the advice to display their authority in an "agreeable awfulness", every order was accompanied by an oath which called "the spade a spade" and the sailor something several times worse. The sluggard was helped along by the "rope's end", the man who dared to question a command or resent an insult was sent to the grid.

Buckingham witnessed this worst of all marine tortures in its

most horrible form when he was forced to watch the flogging of a deserter around the fleet

The naked body of the victim was exposed, and we heard the order given "The prisoner is to receive a dozen lashes from each ship, Boatswain's mates do your duty!" The strokes of the lash fell heavily, and at what seemed to me long intervals (a minute between each at least), the very first brought blood, the sufferer restrained his cries until the fifth or sixth, but then the pent-up agony gave vent in a shriek, enough to rend the heart of a stone. At the end of the first instalment of a dozen lashes, the victim's back was one mass of lacerated flesh and blood [like roasted meat burnt nearly black before a scorching fire, as an eye-witness to another such scene said], and over this was spread a blanket, which we were assured was steeped in vinegar and brine, as some said to augment the suffering, as others contended to prevent mortification. The same horrible scene was repeated till about ten or twelve ships had been visited when the victim having several times fainted, and his voice having ceased to give forth either shrieks or groans, he was reported by the surgeon to be incapable of bearing any further infliction, and was ordered to be rowed ashore to the hospital before which he was discovered to be dead.¹

The young spectator fainted during the ordeal, but was promptly brought to by a "rope's end", he had good reason to know that life on a man-of-war was "a perfect hell on earth."

If flogging was barbarous, impressment was worse, because it forced upon the unwilling sailor all the cruelty of naval life. During Buckingham's youth not a coast of England nor a foreign port (had he not hidden from a press-gang in Lisbon?) nor a ship at sea that might be suspected of sheltering a British seaman was safe from a press-gang's raid. What amounted to a state of war existed around the English ports between the gangs and the sailors, who had able allies in their women. In many coast towns men never went out of doors at night.

But the sailor had his lighter moments. When shore leave turned him loose, he enjoyed life after the manner suggested by the title of a fifteenth-century poem, "The Seven Deadly Sins, or Gyf me Lysens to Lyve in Ease." Once ashore and as long as his money lasted, the sailor had simple wants—"an island of tobacco, a river of rum, and more rum," but all these, it was well known, he would give up for a woman. And his taste in beauty ran more to the naked truth than to the beau-ideal. The British Empire had many *sauveuses* beside Lady Hamilton.

¹ *Autobiography*, I, 156.

When the warships returned from a cruise, women swarmed out to meet them. The boatmen who rowed the women to the vessels were careful to carry only the younger, better looking, and more freshly painted ones, to take out a woman who did not find a man was to lose a fare. And there was keen competition for the sailor's love, as many as twenty thousand women were said to have been in Portsmouth in the last years of the eighteenth century. Occasionally the officers acted as censors of female desirability, but more often they directed their efforts toward preventing the smuggling of liquor aboard, a feat which the women performed adeptly with the aid of bladders suspended beneath their clothes. A man-of-war often received as many as five hundred women, each of whom lived aboard and shared her sailor's berth and allowance as long as the vessel was in port. The merchant seaman took his pleasure ashore where taverns, hotels, and "crimps" specialized in women and the necessary refreshments at fancy prices. But the sailor once in the happy state of "How came ye so?" as drunkenness was called, cared nothing for money.

During the years in Devonport Buckingham enjoyed many opportunities to observe the extravagant carousals of the sailors flush with prize money. Sometimes three or four would hire coaches, mount their tops, and dance hornpipes and reels to the music of violin players seated on the boxes, when the jig was over they would drive a furious race about the town until the horses were exhausted. Bets—ten to twenty guineas a side—enlivened the sport. The sailors dressed in a splendour that defied description—the finest broadcloth for trousers and jackets, scarlet velvet for waist-coats, and golden coins for buttons. The trousers were sure to have gold fringe around the bottoms, and often the jackets were covered with half-guinea pieces, giving them the appearance of chain armour. And he was indeed a poor sailor who could not find three or four women to help him work off the loneliness of the sea. After the sailors' debauches ashore a month's discipline was required to restore a crew to a normal state of efficiency.

But whether on land or sea, the sailors were the victims of deliberate and continuous exploitation. Liquor and women gave them some return for their money, but other charges to their accounts were often only thinly disguised robberies. Jewish peddlers with bright yellow, loudly ticking watches found them easy marks, and unscrupulous lawyers, known as "land sharks," mulcted them.

of their wages by means of various tricks Every dealer in "slops" made it a practice to sell them clothes of the worst quality for the highest price Even the surgeons overcharged them for pills And the officers looked upon this exploitation as a necessary element in the system which kept the men at work

When one realizes the conditions under which they lived, worked, and fought, to condemn the sailors for their brief carousals would seem to be a mockery of sympathy and understanding The common sailors suffered as all the people suffered under the traditional social order

And they were ignorant and superstitious only as the people were ignorant and superstitious Of course they were "unthinking" and "wavering men", few of them could read, and fewer still could write Imaginative and moody, at one moment they were dejected, in the next exuberant, the long hours at sea bred in them both a melancholy and an avid longing for news They met every ship with the cry, "What news? What news of the fleet? What news of England?" They were braggarts, each ship that sailed the seas was the fastest, at least to those who manned her Certainly they were profane, immoral, usually blasé, and on occasions impudent, that was true at least of the sailor who, after having picked up a lady and carried her across a muddy street, promptly carried her back again when she slapped his face as a reward for his gallantry But wherever there were sailors, there a feeling of brotherly comradeship prevailed the Spanish boast that sailors were brothers the world over was true Among themselves existed those sympathies which society in general denied them Their moments of luxury were grand breaks in the monotony of a bare existence and a poor reward for their toil, which was at once so perilous and so severe that, upon their giving up the sea, it left them physically broken and diseased, worst of all without hope of relief An old sailor was a rare and pathetic figure

But the officers were not much better than the men There is the anecdote of the captain who, in answer to the shout from the main deck that the battle was won, replied—pacing the quarter-deck in even greater concentration than during the fighting—"Yes, yes, I know it, but the worst is yet to come There is that damn letter to the admiralty" The first English treatise on naval tactics did not appear until 1782, and English charts were the worst in the world until 1830 Among officers who despised learning and sailors

who fought best as they lived—with their bodies—Nelson's rule of gunnery, "Get so close to your enemy that you can't miss," clearly epitomized tactics and strategy as they were understood and practised by the old-time seamen of all ranks

The wonder is that late Georgian England prospered as it did in commerce and in war. The reason was morale. The sailors were a spirited lot, like Buckingham, they acquired an ardour for the sea in the life of the ports, from the tales of riches and adventure beyond England's little island, and from those traditions of battle and plunder which had grown during centuries of successful rivalry with Spaniards, Dutchmen, and Frenchmen both in the narrow Channel and on the high seas.

For the sailors and the people generally this morale vibrated through certain poems and songs, now long since forgotten, but which in their time were vital elements in the maintenance of Britain's supremacy on the sea. William Falconer's *The Shipwreck*—"the *Odyssey* of the merchant sailor"—provided a veritable "grammar" of his professional science, and the sea songs of Charles Dibdin sent so many recruits to the navy that the author was placed on the pension list. It was said that, with the exception of Nelson and a half-dozen other famous sea-lions, he won more battles for England than any other man. The sea-madness of England's sailors rioted through his verses.

On deck five hundred men did dance,
The stoutest they could find in France
We with two hundred did advance
On board the *Arethusa*

The outcome of this rash zeal was described in the verse of another writer, James Johnson

For the days of our own, Sir, surpass all by far,
Whoever heard of the like?
When a Briton e'er meets with a foe's man-of-war
Pray doesn't the enemy strike?

It is well to remember the fighting, drinking, cursing, suffering multitude who placed Nelson on his column in Trafalgar Square. They were the guts and the sinews of the British lion.

2 VOYAGES IN THE ATLANTIC AND MEDITERRANEAN

A shot from *La Josephine* brought the *Titus* up sharply. The pursuit had been short, and defence was impossible, for the *Titus* carried only two guns. The English were at the mercy of their captors.² But the French privateer was disappointed. The cargo of the prize consisted only of heavy tools going out to the West India sugar-plantations, and such goods had no sale in France. Rather than weaken the privateer's crew in order to bring the English merchantman into port, the French decided to leave her to the uncertain fate of blind navigation. They seized the charts, compasses, quadrants, and sextants, confiscated the ventures of the captain and the chief officer, dumped the two guns overboard, and departed to search for richer booty. Abandonment to the vicissitudes of the open sea was a better fortune—at least the chief officer, young Buckingham, thought so—than languishing in prison, he had been there. But luck did not entirely desert the *Titus*. Soon the topsails caught the trade winds, and she rolled steadily westward toward her destination in Trinidad. Four weeks later—five after leaving London—she passed the Dragon's Mouth and anchored in the Port of Spain.

While at sea Buckingham spent much of his spare time in reading, he had formed the habit on the packets. In the shade of the head sails or aloft in the main-topsheets he would lie and muse over books of travel, geography, and history. By this ardour for learning he added to his knowledge of the world and gained a reputation among the superstitious sailors as an astrologer able to foretell the future. No doubt such a reputation was valuable to a young man charged with maintaining the ship's discipline.

But once in port there was heavy work to be done amid many difficulties. Shortly after the *Titus* anchored, a tropical hurricane, furious beyond any tempest Buckingham had yet encountered, flattened houses, drove inland two miles a couple of ships which slipped their anchors and stranded them, up-ended a score more, and scattered the great sugar-casks about like paper. Fortunately the *Titus* was not damaged. The sailors then took their fling ashore and found the rum as devastating inwardly as the hurricane had been outwardly. And the captain, a brother of Buckingham's wife, was too much in the state of "How came ye so?" to look after any-

² This account of Buckingham's voyages is based upon his *Autobiography*, I, Chapters XI to XXII, and II, Chapters I to VII.

thing except business ashore As these hindrances came and went, the young chief officer landed the cargo and reloaded the ship for the homeward voyage

Off the Banks of Newfoundland, in the dead of night, a hurricane struck the convoy with which the *Titus* was sailing Three ships foundered, and the masts of thirty-three others were swept away Others lost portions of their spars and rigging The *Titus* was heaved over on her side, nearly going under, only a lucky gust of contrary wind brought her upright again The commodore of the fleet ordered the ships to share their spare equipment, and the faster sailors took the slower ones in tow The storm also depleted the supply of fresh water, and, for the last thirty days of the voyage, each sailor on the *Titus* received only a quarter-pint a day

During a brief stay in London, before he shipped for Virginia on the *Rising States*, Buckingham listened to Joanna Southcote, who claimed to be pregnant with a new Messiah, paid his respects to "Young" Gully, the champion prize fighter of the day, and joined the Free Masons The *Rising States* belonged to one of his wife's brothers, who had made considerable money in trade with China around the Horn.

For nine weeks the ship fought the autumn gales of the North Atlantic before the dismal coasts of Virginia were sighted Even Norfolk with its white-walled houses, green verandahs, and Venetian blinds did not belie the forlorn aspect of the forest-covered coast. Buckingham found that the town's unpaved streets, in which were mixed mud, snow, innumerable pigs, half-clad slaves, shivering mulattoes, drunken Indians—beggarly in spite of their gaudy paint and feathers—and dirty whites, harmonized well with the dull and monotonous lines of the winter landscape And Virginian society was anything but elevating The universal habits of tobacco-chewing and toddy-drinking disgusted him, and American slavery seemed even more evil than that of Trinidad He spent his most pleasant evenings with some ladies who delighted in the love poems of Thomas Moore He lent his talents to the staging of *She Stoops to Conquer*, undertaken as a benefit for the American sailors who, on account of Jefferson's non-intercourse policy, were suffering for want of food and shelter

Spring and the failure of the non-intercourse policy freed the *Rising States*, which, laden with a cargo of tobacco, returned to London Except for one disaster, the voyage was uneventful, one

of the two "nightingales" which he was taking home to his wife escaped from its cage, and the other died of lonesomeness Buckingham recorded his grief in sentimental verses

The experiences of these two voyages won the young officer a promotion, and a few weeks after reaching London he put to sea again as captain of the *Surrey*, bound for Nassau. The cargo was destined for the smuggling trade with Spanish America. When the ship had cleared Gravesend and was fairly at sea, his first act was to call the men to the quarter-deck, where he announced to them new rules of discipline, as well as regulations for securing the health of everyone on board

To abstain from drinking spirits, as it was the source of nearly all the accidents, quarrels, and breaches of discipline that occurred at sea, and never benefited but always injured men in proportion to its excess

To suppress all rising murmurs or feelings of dissatisfaction at their first birth, as they only gained strength by indulgence

To abstain from oaths or coarse language to each other, as an ill word often provoked a blow, and the harmony in which men should live who were shut up in so confined a space, and could never escape from each other for many months at least, ought to be preserved as much as possible, and nothing could effect this so much as kind words and mutual good will and assistance

To preserve cleanliness in their berths, their persons, and their clothes, as favourable to health, good temper, and order for which purpose one washing-day, free from all other duty, would be granted in the middle of each week, to wash their own clothes, besides the daily washing of decks in the morning, and the cleaning out the berths when the hammocks were brought on deck for airing

To attend divine service on Sundays in the forenoon, whenever the weather admitted, each man to present himself clean-shaved, washed and combed, and with his best apparel, the afternoon and evening being at their own disposal for writing letters, reading, or conversation

On Saturday night, devoted at sea to the memories of wives and sweethearts, a dance to be allowed on the main deck, with songs and stories in the forecastle, it being assumed that there was neither man nor boy on board, who had not either a wife or a sweetheart, as a seaman, without an object of affection left behind him on shore, would be deficient in one of the most prolific sources of sympathy and enthusiasm, and could never be expected to perform his duty so well as one who looked forward to receive, at the end of his voyage, the reward of reciprocal affection from his betrothed or his bride³

He offered prizes which, at the end of the voyage, were to be given to the wives and sweethearts of those men who were the most

³ *Autobiography*, I, 271

successful in obeying the rules. The sailors were to choose these men without interference from the officers and were to consider seaman-ship and personal popularity, as well as good conduct, in determining the winners.

Although it would be going too far to see in these youthful promulgations any theory of social reform, they are nevertheless an evidence of a zeal on Buckingham's part to deal with the conditions of the common sailors' existence. But it is hard to believe that the sailors, any more than the world, were longing for sobriety, gentility, and cleanliness. Perhaps the cheers which greeted the captain's words were for the sweethearts ashore.

The homeward voyage turned out to be most perilous. In the North Atlantic the December gales raged so fiercely that for days no sail could be unfurled. Off England the fogs hid the coast, and land was not sighted until a temporary anchorage was made under the lee of the promontory of Dungeness. But the weary captain found no rest there: out of the fog came a French privateer, and there was nothing to do but cut loose the anchor and run, fighting as he made for the open Channel. When the *Surrey* gave the privateer a broadside of nine guns, the enemy sheered off. Privateers generally cared little for those prizes which offered resistance. In the Channel again—at nightfall—the *Surrey* was headed into the wind for Dover, and all night long she fought the storm. When morning came, Christmas morning, the ship was near land at Cape Grmez, and soundings showed her almost aground. Fortunately the French shore batteries held their fire until heroic measures in raising all possible sail swung her off the shoals. This success brought a volley which cut up the rigging, but the ship was quickly manœuvred out of range.

As night came on again Buckingham anchored in the lee of Goodwin Sands, where all went well until midnight when a shift in the wind made it necessary to get free in order to avoid going aground. The second anchor was lost, the strainings of the ship opened leaks which sent the men to the pumps, and the storm soon drove them out to sea again. For three days they fought the tempest, each hour bringing them nearer the Dutch coast where either death in the wreckage of the vessel or confinement in prison awaited them, for at that time Holland was an ally of France. Only Buckingham's delay in consenting to the plea of the crew to surrender saved them from becoming prisoners of war. On the third day, about noon,

the wind veered to the south-east, and the *Surrey* headed back toward the Thames. Night brought them to a third anchorage off Orfordness under the lee of a Newcastle collier. When it suddenly hoisted anchor and sailed away, Buckingham decided to follow it up the Thames, but difficulties in raising the sheet anchor caused a delay, and the collier disappeared in the darkness. The loss of the sheet anchor left Buckingham the choice of returning to the open sea or steering up the Swin for Gravesend, he decided to hazard the navigation of the river, which, on account of the shifting of the buoys and sands by the storm, was more dangerous than usual. Only continuous soundings and a most vigilant watch saved the *Surrey* from grounding. Finally they reached Gravesend, where a pilot came aboard, two tides carried them to the West India dock.

The *Surrey* was in port, but the captain was still in trouble. When the ship was dry-docked, it was found to be in good condition except for a badly honeycombed copper-bottom. If the damage was the result of ordinary wear and tear, the shipowners had no claim for insurance, on the other hand, if the injuries had been caused by grounding, the underwriters would be obliged to furnish a new bottom. The owners appealed to Buckingham, asking him to swear that the ship had been aground on the Goodwin Sands. When he refused to lie, the owners, as he put it, "accepted his resignation," and he had cause to reflect on the "vaunted honesty" of the English merchant.

The young captain quickly obtained a new ship, the *William*, sailing to Smyrna. To the familiar menaces of gales and privateers were now added the pirates of Northern Africa and the Aegean Islands, but protection against those of Africa could be obtained by securing a "Mediterranean Pass" from the Admiralty. The Mediterranean ports—Gibraltar, Valetta, and Smyrna—with their gaiety, luxury, new types of feminine beauty, and strange customs pleased his tastes as much as the coarser life of the new world had disgusted them. The sight of "the lofty hills of Greece" so moved him to enthusiasm that only the constant watch for pirates held him to mundane things.

On the outward voyage the commodore of the convoy impressed eight of the *William*'s sailors, including the ship's carpenter. Buckingham sent a letter of protest to the commodore, threatening him with a civil suit for damages if the *William* were injured because of lack of hands to navigate the ship. When the commodore ignored

this letter the young captain took occasion a few days later, while the convoy was becalmed, to have himself rowed to the flagship and demanded the return of his men. This audacity set the fleet buzzing and secured the return of three sailors and the carpenter.

Upon returning to London, Buckingham found that the *William* had been sold, leaving him free for a round of those parties with which merchant officers regaled themselves ashore. But he cared little for assemblies where the entertainment consisted of getting drunk and the conversation revolved about such topics as the stock exchange, freight rates, and law suits. His interests ran to literature and the arts, subjects which the common run of merchant captains found easy enough to abandon to women. Introductions, which acquaintances in Smyrna had given him, opened up new contacts, and he was soon able to return to the sea as captain of the *Scipio*. It was well armed and sailed without convoy. Buckingham had good use for the armament before he reached Smyrna.

As twilight settled upon the Mediterranean, the *Hebe* and the *Scipio*, some two miles apart and becalmed, lay off the Islands of Cervi. Earlier in the day the English vessels had been warned by a ship from the east that two pirate crafts were lurking behind the islands, waiting for the first opportunity to carry out the gentle practices of beheading men and scuttling ships. The *Scipio*, which was in advance of her consort, was not in condition to withstand an attack, her captain was down with fever, and her crew, mostly non-Britishers, were untried at fighting. Luckily, however, the warning had given time to prepare a defence.

Just at nightfall the pirates were sighted off the *Scipio*'s bow, their decks crowded with armed and eager men. At the first appearance of the pirates, Buckingham had himself carried on deck where, propped against the capstan, he directed the defence. Fortunately the pirates chose to fight one at a time. As the enemy approached, the *Scipio* hailed, but there was no answer. When the challenge was repeated without a reply, the *Scipio*'s ten twelve-pounders spoke in a broadside, which cut away the pirate's main mast and spread death and confusion among its crew. But undismayed by the accuracy of this fire, the raider made for the *Scipio* in a bold attempt to board. Twice the pirates fastened lanyards to the rail, and as many times the ship's carpenter cut them loose with an axe. Those pirates who reached the decks were killed in hand-to-hand fighting. Foiled in the second attempt to board, the pirate

craft dropped astern where it hoped to be more successful, because merchant vessels usually carried no guns there. But on the *Scipio* two long nine-pounders that had been prepared for this emergency by being loaded to the muzzles with round shot, cannister, and double chain shot awaited the new onslaught. The heat of the battle had counteracted the captain's fever, and he rushed below to direct the fire. Just as the pirate swung under the stern, the charges of the nine-pounders burst full upon his deck. Buckingham was knocked down by the recoil of the guns and wounded in the hip so badly that he could not rise, but the enemy veered off and, to the amazement of the *Scipio*'s crew, sank with all on board, the fire of the nine-pounders had pierced the bottom of the boat. At this turn of affairs the second enemy, which had stood off at musket range, hastened to pull away.

The *Scipio* held the field but was badly cut up. The sails flapped in shreds. The rigging was loose and tangled. The deck was covered with fallen spars, splinters, and blood. Half the crew were wounded, the other half dead tired, and the captain was hurt so badly that he could not stand. Only three persons—the cook, a young midshipman, and the captain's wife—were able to keep the watch. They cleared the deck, tossed overboard the bodies of several dead pirates, and waited for morning.

After this voyage Buckingham planned to set up a ship merchant's store at Valetta in Malta, the thriving centre in Southern Europe for the trade in those wares which Napoleon's decrees attempted to exclude from the continent. The enterprise and the location were well chosen, but unforeseen events brought a quick disaster. When the new merchant arrived at Valetta with his supplies, he found it a city of the dying and the dead, the plague, which on his previous voyage had been in the Levantine ports, had reached Malta. All business was at a standstill, entire streets were barred up, the sick were left to die where they fell, and the dead were buried in a lime-filled trench. He escaped by going to Smyrna, but his goods were landed, and, in the general clean-up after the plague, were burned.

Again Buckingham was penniless, worse still, he was in debt. His wife and daughter had remained in England where they found refuge with relatives.

3. TRAVELS IN EGYPT

As the *Theodosia* sailed eastward through waters softly browned by the Nile's flood, Buckingham watched Alexandria's flat roofs and circular towers shape themselves against the blaze of the sun-filled sky.⁴ He had come from Smyrna, a free passenger by courtesy of the captain, to tempt fate, this time under Allah and the Albanian tobacco peddler, who was successor to the Pharaohs, Ptolemies, Caesars, Califs, and Sultans in the timeless abyss that is Egypt. No project led the disappointed merchant there, only hopes built upon the advice of John Lee, British consul at Smyrna, gave support to his natural enterprise. In Alexandria he found a welcome with John Lee's brother, Peter—also a British consul. The Lees were agents of English mercantile houses, John for Lee and Sons, a London company which for over a hundred years had been engaged in the raw-silk trade, and Peter for Briggs and Company, a Liverpool firm much interested in the commercial exploitation of Egypt. The ex-captain spent a week in Alexandria, where he won a prize at a soirée of the Bucolicanic Association for translating a French poem into English, picked up a few more words of vulgar Arabic (some of which he had already learned in Valetta), received the news that he had become the father of a son, and found opinion favourable to the proposal of offering his services to Mehemet Ali. On September 22, 1813, he departed by the Rosetta Gate for Cairo, and Allah, at least, had much in store for him.

After spending the night in Rosetta he took a river-boat for the ascent of the Nile. The Etesian winds filled the great white lateen sail and drove the ship at a good speed against the current, only at the bends in the river was it necessary for the crew—amphibious, swarthy, and naked except for ragged loin cloths—to take to the banks with hawsers to tow the boat. The *reis* was a trader whose customers lived in the villages along the banks, and the frequent stops gave the passenger an opportunity to view the land and study its people. Villages, clinging to the low mounds which raised the reed houses above the flood, nestled beneath the luxurious shade.

⁴ This narrative of Buckingham's activities in Egypt is based upon his *Autobiography*, II, Chapters VIII to XXII, and an unpublished manuscript in the British Museum, 22602, *Journal of an Excursion into Nubia from the Cataract of Assuan and Philoe to within 22nd Degree of North Latitude made in the year 1813 by James Silk Buckingham*.

of heavily fruited date palms, sycamores, orange-walks, and lemon-bowers Over and above the villages, the palm groves, and the boat's white sail, innumerable pigeons, their bodies aglint in the sunlight, fluttered and swirled Only the miserable humans, who emerged from the hovels to vociferate with the captain and the crew, broke the charm which kindly nature laid over the land As the boat drew nearer to the capital the scene gained both in beauty and in awe On one side beyond the variegated carpet of the freshly growing fields which filled the valley was the desolation of the desert, above was the sun, brilliant and silent like the mystery of life, even as it had been in the days when Iknaton proclaimed it the one true god, in the foreground, backed by a low ridge of hills, were the domes and minarets of still another one true god, and, behind a forest of lateen masts about busy wharves, streets—narrow, twisting, and alluring—led away into that confusion of humanity which the Arabs called “the mother of the world”

In Cairo, as in Alexandria, the hospitality of a British consul, Colonel Misset, sheltered the wandering sailor now far on the road to becoming an adventurer

While waiting for the opportunity to offer his services to the Pasha, Buckingham yielded to the lure of Cairo and its environs He visited the pyramid of Cheops, climbed to its apex, and penetrated its interior He explored the ancient catacombs where thousands of mummies lay By day he frequented the coffee shops, the bazaars, and the mosques, listened to the street story-tellers recount the fictions of Oriental love and intrigue, and admired the voluptuous exhibitions of dancing girls At night there were the entertainments at the consular residence, with dinners prepared by a former *chef-de-cuisine* of the King of Naples and balls—graced by European and Levantine ladies and by handsome women from the harems—“sometimes so exhaustingly pleasurable” that rest came as an agreeable relief

He found the world pleasant, almost like an Arabian Night's enchantment, for after all was he not a merchant captain without money, heavily in debt, unemployed, and a wanderer?

But he was not the only adventurer who dallied at the Oriental feast Since the greatest adventurer of them all had gambled for the Empire of the East amid the sands of the Pyramids and the shoals of Aboukir and, having lost there, had found hopes for a milder conquest by praising Allah and wearing loose trousers,

Egypt had swarmed with trucklers after fortune. Some who could not come in person—Jeremy Bentham, for example—dispatched long letters to the lucky winner of the lottery. Mehemet Ali, who was said by some to be the most remarkable man of the age next to Napoleon, was most remarkable because he had won where his greater prototype had failed. But the Albanian owed some of his good fortune to the same power which had frustrated his predecessor, for it was an English gig that had pulled him, half-drowned, from the same waters which, with the timely co-operation of Lord Nelson and England's marine helots, had engulfed Napoleon's venture. Saved from drowning, the ignorant major of the Albanian Bashibozuks climbed to power by skilfully manipulating the dissensions between the Mamelukes and the Porte. In 1808 the sheiks of Cairo elected him Pasha, three years later a revolution in the army which ended in the massacre of the Mamelukes gave him the absolute mastery of Egypt. He recognized the nominal suzerainty of the Turkish sultan, but he treated Egypt as his own.

The destruction of the Mamelukes was only the beginning of a greater revolution, which was carried out along lines best described in the words of its administrator, "I had to begin by scratching the soil of Egypt with a pin, I have now to cultivate it with a spade, but I mean to have all the benefits of the plough." The new Pasha seized the ownership of the land, monopolized the foreign trade, and opened the country to the rapid introduction of such European ideas and practices as might be immediately or permanently profitable to himself. Foreigners were attracted to him by the prospects of rewards, and he came to possess for them what amounted to almost a mania. Among all who offered advice and sought his bounty the English were the favourites, particularly those connected with the firm of Briggs and Company.

Of what use could a wandering sailor be to such a man? That was something which the sailor proposed to discover both for the Pasha and for himself.

Unfortunately at the time of Buckingham's arrival in Cairo, Mehemet Ali was in Arabia fighting the fanatic Wahabees, who had seized the holy cities of Mecca and Medina and had interrupted the pilgrimages of the pious Mohammedans. But in Cairo there was a confidential agent of the Pasha, Boghoz Yuseff, whom Buckingham, with the support of Colonel Misset, was able to approach. One among the Pasha's many projects was the transportation of two

finely built American brigs, which he had purchased, from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea where they could be used in putting down pirates and in moving troops. Originally the Pasha had planned to sail the ships around Africa, but, upon hearing of the East India Company's hostility to maritime invaders of the Indian Ocean, he had abandoned the project. The brigs rode at anchor in the harbour of Alexandria. To the ex-merchant captain the ships were an opportunity, he no sooner heard of them and of the Pasha's desire than he framed a scheme for their transportation to the Red Sea at the ridiculously low price of one thousand pounds each, if the Pasha furnished the necessary labourers. The plan was to sail the ships up the Nile to Boulac, strand them as the flood receded, dismantle them, and erect beneath them supports and great rollers upon which they could be drawn across to Suez. Colonel Misset considered the plan feasible, and Boghoz was so impressed that he sent a dispatch to Mehemet Ali in Arabia for official approval.

Meanwhile other pots bubbled a little. In Alexandria Peter Lee conceived the idea of expanding the business of his house by placing three or four ships in a regular service between Bombay and Suez, from this latter port connections would be made with Alexandria by way of caravan to Cairo and by boat down the Nile. To carry out the scheme he proposed to send Buckingham to Bombay as a courier with a letter to Briggs's representative there. Buckingham was to be made a supercargo on one of the ships in the trade. Lee's idea was not new by any means. Shortly after the Indian successes of Clive and Hastings, English interest in this shorter route had become active. The pioneer was George Baldwin, who denounced the French activities in Egypt and, after sailing a vessel from Calcutta to Suez, poured together the waters of the Thames, the Ganges, and the Nile at the Great Pyramid, all this he did before 1800 in the hope that the Red Sea might one day be England's short-cut to India. But little came of his zeal. Alexandria with only eight thousand people remained a dreary remnant of a once thriving seaport, and three or four Turkish merchants kept up the trade that had once been the glory of Egypt and the envy of the world. Syrian Aleppo was the centre of the existing overland trade with India.

But Buckingham preferred to keep company with his proposals to the Pasha. Upon being informed of Lee's offer, Boghoz sent a second message to Mehemet Ali, suggesting the construction of a

ship canal from Suez to the Mediterranean or a branch of the Nile At the same time Buckingham and Boghoz agreed that a journey to Kosseir and a voyage from there to Suez, as a means of gathering hydrographic data for the navigation of the Red Sea, were necessary preliminaries to the greater undertakings they had in mind The expedition would keep the captain busy until the replies to their dispatches arrived from the Pasha

To have recognized the ex-sailor on the morning of his departure for Keneh up the Nile would have been difficult His head was shaved, his moustache was long—after the Turkish fashion—and a Turkish costume cloaked his heavy muscular form, two pistols and a Stamboul sword with a handle of rhinoceros horn gave him a warlike mien Boghoz had provided him with a boat and a firman to the local governors, who were to aid and protect him He was to leave the river at Keneh for the overland journey to Kosseir

Buckingham was in no hurry to reach the Red Sea The voyage up the Nile was a golden opportunity to inspect the wonders of the valley He gathered dewdrops in the rose-fields of Faioum Each succeeding ruin—Antinoe, Hermopolis, Abydos, Tentyra—inspired him with greater wonder He longed to remain in an everlasting meditation in the Temple of Isis at Tentyra, with an even greater yearning he wished that the carved images on the Temple's walls could speak From them he thought he might learn the wisdom of the ancient Egyptian priesthood or perhaps the secrets of the Eleusinian mysteries, that prime profligacy of Greek civilization Thebes—“the hundred-gated Thebes”—was most inspiring of all, he spent a month wandering through its ruins

Keneh was already two hundred miles below him, and he had no intention of turning back At Esneh he met Burckhardt, the Swiss-English traveller, with whom he spent several pleasant hours Finally he reached Syene at the first cataract where, leaving the Pasha's boat, he and Giovanni, a personal servant, made ready for an excursion into Nubia

As he entered the rapids new scenes mingled with the old The narrow strip of cultivated land was now confined to the east bank, and the rafts of earthenware jars, laden with grain and floating northward to the granaries of the Pasha, had disappeared from the river But the fellahin were still to be seen, ever picking their courses on one-man rafts among the sand banks and the crocodiles Although now fewer in number, ruins of tombs and temples still dotted the

banks of the river One of these, it was discovered, sheltered "an idiot female," who performed "holy embraces" with those natives who came to worship her as a "goddess" As usual the scenery inspired him, but the glare of the sun had already made him its victim, every further advance was at the cost of increased pain in his swelling eyelids

The people of Nubia had negroid features, and their villages, although they were built in the ancient ruins, were the poorest that the traveller had yet seen Misery, disease, and poverty seemed everywhere more frightful than in the lower valleys A slave train of emasculated boys and cast-encased virgins, alike bound for Turkish harems, gave him another glimpse of that social evil he had learned to hate in Trinidad and Virginia

In Nubia the coming of a "Frank," as all Europeans were called in Egypt, was of sufficient importance to mark an era in the local chronology, and, as the report of his progress spread, the people crowded to the river to beg favours and observe his magic, for which all Franks had great repute During the ascent of the Nile the sailors had ascribed to him supernatural powers, and he had made use of their credulity in maintaining discipline In Nubia his powers were to be tested to the utmost

At one of the villages there came to the boat an old man who was passionately eager to buy a youth charm

The man was old, the torrent of his blood grew calm, his spirits lagged and the invigorating streams of life were beginning to dry up.—a list of sixteen wives and nearly fifty children of whom about forty had died either in infancy or at birth, had exhausted the strength of his loins,—his memory, however, was unimpaired, for he recounted the history of his wives with pleasure, and particularized them by their names, their qualities, and the length of time they had shared his embraces, as well as the reasons of his divorce, for most of them were still living, and his children, like the young animals of the country, no sooner walked than they were obliged to seek both food and refuge for themselves ⁵

The old reprobate urged his demands for the charm with much gesticulation and a piece of Turkish gold, which had been the treasure of his household for years, even if he was ready to surrender if he might be reinvigorated sufficiently to take another bride, a Numidian Venus of fourteen years After some secret preparations

⁵ *Journal of an Excursion into Nubia*, 73.

Buckingham, from curiosity rather than from hope of reward, consented to perform the necessary magic

The head of a fowl was dissevered, the blood received into a basin, and some of the same rubbed on my arm, which I had stripped by turning up my shirt. He was easily persuaded to believe that this blood was mine, from its being still warm, and that mixing it with his own by drinking, his veins would swell again with youthful vigour. A few lines were then written on a paper which I swallowed myself, a few drops of ink mingled with the warm draught, after a magic incantation over the ascending steam, he drank it off, and said it was delicious. He had scarcely given it time to circulate through his system, before his heated imagination already anticipated the enjoyment of his bride, he told me he was ready for the task, and longed to begin.⁶

But success did not close the incident. The old man remembered his promise to bring the virgin to his benefactor

In the ardour of his impatience therefore he hurried off to bring me the altar for an offering to Venus, and from the speed of his return his sense of honour, or a feeling of fear, had kept the altar inviolate, so that upon it, I might have offered up in purity a virgin sacrifice, but when the sable priestess came, the fire of devotion was slow in kindling, her ebon beauties, lovely as they might have been in Nubian eyes, and fitted to inflame the passions of a southern soul, had but little power upon the stubborn phlegm of a northern constitution, and my continence, tho' not so full of heroism, was as complete as Scipio's—When I returned, therefore, the golden payment and the virgin youth into the old man's hands untouched, he was ready to worship me.⁷

Giovanni, however, was not so cold to the beauties of the Southern clime, for at the price of his Turkish watch he purchased a negress, who shared his lot until on the return down the Nile she had the misfortune to be stolen by two Turkish soldiers

At Dukkee the swelling in Buckingham's eyes became so severe that he could no longer see, and he was compelled to abandon the ambitious plan of penetrating Abyssinia. By keeping in the shadows on the deck, by covering his eyes, and by bathing them in cold water he recovered his vision, and in two weeks he had floated down to Keneh.

His failure to undertake the overland journey to Kosseir when he first arrived at Keneh had not been entirely due to his own waywardness. Mehemet Ali's losses in the field and his failure to pay the soldiers, half-bandits that they were at best, had created

⁶ *Journal of an Excursion into Nubia*, 73-74.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 74.

a mutinous spirit in the army, and a military revolt was expected at any moment. The turmoil had not subsided when Buckingham again reached Keneh. He was attacked twice as he walked about the streets, and Giovanni, frightened by the menacing soldiers, deserted his employer in favour of a hasty flight to Cairo. But James Silk was undaunted. He hired an Albanian soldier as a guide and, keeping to the unfrequented mountain trails in the hope of avoiding the wandering bands of soldiers, set off for Kosseir.

At noon on the second day out—Christmas, 1813—when Buckingham risked taking a few minutes sleep, the guide got drunk, and a sneak thief stole their muskets and untied their camels. These unhappy events forced the wayfarers to seek more frequented trails, and, after purchasing two asses, they made fair if not pleasant progress. The stench from the decaying carcasses of the dead animals littering the way was too strong for the traveller to indulge in his usual rhapsodies on the beauties of nature. Hyenas furnished an accompaniment for the doleful drama. When a wandering band of soldiers came up, the guide fled, abandoning Buckingham to the mercy of his captors, who spat on the Pasha's firman, stole their victim's money, stripped him naked, and left him to die. Only a talisman fastened to the hair under his right arm remained to the gallant sailor. He wandered along the mountain road—lost, naked, without food or drink, scorched by day and chilled by night—for two days before the good Samaritan appeared in the person of an Arab ass-driver, who covered him with a goat-hair shirt, set him upon an ass, and gave him some raw corn to eat. But the grain swelled and nearly killed him with the pains caused by his stomach's distension.

Certainly one can be forgiven a sympathetic smile as he pictures the ex-merchant captain, who loved literature and polite society, coming out of the mountains into Kosseir in a knee-length shirt, with short hair and a long moustache, on feet swollen from walking the stony trail, and with his frame bent and distorted, seared through with the painful abrasions from riding the jogging ass. Upon reaching the city he dropped in the street unable to move. But after a while he recovered sufficiently to open the talisman, which contained two Venetian sequins (he gave them to the kindly ass-driver) and a note from the Pasha's commercial agent in Keneh to a Coptic merchant in Kosseir. The latter received the wanderer cordially and supplied him with a clean shirt, a bath, oil for his

wounds, and a mat upon which he found in sleep a release from pain and fatigue

By the next morning Buckingham was eager to undertake the voyage to Suez, but the Copt advised against it All the vessels from Suez had been seized for the transport service, and the ships crossing from Kosseir to Jeddah were loaded so heavily with supplies and troops that three or four had foundered The military disorders threatened to spread into Kosseir, where, due to the congestion of the troops and the failure of the wells, water was selling at a dollar a jar The Copt advised him to return as quickly as possible to Keneh, and for once he made discretion the better part of valour With asses and a guide provided by the friendly merchant, he set out without delay and, after three days and nights of travelling by a more northerly course than the one he had followed from Keneh, he reached the Nile The river with its ribbon of vegetation seemed a garland of heaven to the wanderer Filled with the desert thirst, he eagerly drank its waters, this time he did not linger to make excursions but embarked at once for the descent to Cairo

Boghoz awaited him with news from the Pasha Mehemet Ali had decided that the moving of the brigs was no longer vital to his plans in the Red Sea, on the other hand he had ordered that the survey of the ship canal from Suez should be made at once and instructed Boghoz to provide the means for carrying it out Buckingham lost no time in preparing to execute the commission

Early in February, 1814, two poor Arab fellahin with full beards, coarse muslin turbans, blue cotton shirts, long shawls of the same material, muslin drawers, and red slippers rode their camels out of the Gate of Victory east-bound for Suez Two days later, without even having seen the desert Bedouins who preyed upon the rich caravans passing regularly between the Egyptian capital and the Red Sea, they entered Suez The evident poverty of the men did not prevent one of them from calling on the governor of the city, with whom he spent two days He inspected the harbour and quarrelled with his guide over wages When the guide gave in, they departed to survey the ancient canal They rode their camels north-westward from Suez, following the depressions, until the canal disappeared in the desert They then crossed the Land of Goshen and followed the Nile down to Damietta, where one of them dropped his disguise and took a coastwise boat for Alexandria

Buckingham spent the summer of 1814 with Peter Lee, who

revived the project for opening the Red Sea route to India. By offering the Pasha a share in the Indian trade, Lee and Buckingham hoped to secure some special concessions for themselves. While waiting for Mehemet Ali to return from Arabia, the ex-merchant made excursions about the delta and applied himself to the perfection of his Arabic.

Mehemet Ali was eager to listen to any one with ideas, and Buckingham was ready to fill his ears. When the Pasha discovered that his petitioner was a navigator and spoke Arabic, he dismissed the interpreters and attendants and discussed informally the improvement of the country. Since the Europeans who came to converse with the illiterate despot were learned, usually, beyond his range of interests and quite useless for all those purposes toward which practical politics directed his energies, it is not surprising that he found the man who was informed about commerce and navigation a pleasing contrast to the common run of petitioners.

When the Pasha asked what measures he would recommend for the improvement of the country, Buckingham answered that Egypt's first need was the introduction of Western science and the practical technology to which European countries owed their superiority over those of the East. This introduction, he explained, could be best brought about by sending young men to be educated in Europe and America, where, by going into factories, shops, and shipyards, they could learn the technical arts. Upon returning to Egypt these young men would form not only a growing body of native specialists capable of developing the country but also a solid resistance to foreign exploitation. He warned the Pasha against sending the students to the Western universities because such institutions were aristocratic and therefore impractical. To bring about an immediate economic improvement, he recommended the introduction of long-staple cotton from the Atlantic seaboard of America. As a matter of record it should be noted that these recommendations were successfully adopted somewhat later by Mehemet Ali.

No one would argue that these measures had their origin in the fertile brain of the wandering Cornishman, but it certainly can be asserted that he was competent to make such suggestions, for he never was at a loss for methods to improve anything to which his attention might be called, particularly states and society.

When the project for a canal to connect the Mediterranean with the Red Sea was touched upon, the Pasha opposed it with consider-

able spirit His original enthusiasm for this undertaking had cooled, and at this late date his reasons appear to have been well founded

"If this Canal be made, which nation of Europe will make the most use of it for their ships? Will it not be the English, in passing from their own country to their Indian empire, and back again?" I replied, "Undoubtedly" "And do you not think," said he, "that when they come to see this beautiful garden of Egypt, which is now my own, they will envy me its possession, and with that propensity which they have hitherto manifested, of first falling in love with a country, and then taking possession of it, many years will not pass before they will pick a quarrel with me about the Canal, or the tolls, or any other disputable point, and cut the matter short, by using their ships, which are known to be the largest and best armed in the world, and in which any number of troops may be conveyed, to take possession of Egypt, as they have done of India, and pretend that it is for the interests of its inhabitants that this change of rulers should be effected?" I was obliged to admit, that judging from the antecedents of our history, this was not improbable "And should I not then," continued the Pasha, "be thus sharpening the knife by which my own throat was to be cut? No, no, I will never be guilty of this folly at least, but wait until I hear that your countrymen have become cured of this propensity of taking what does not belong to them, and justifying the theft by alleging that the plundered parties are all the happier for their change of masters, before I give my sanction to any Canal between the two seas"⁸

Inasmuch as this conversation occurred sixty-one years before Disraeli's speculation and was recorded in Buckingham's *Autobiography* five years before De Lesseps set the fellahin digging, there seems to be no reason to doubt its authenticity

The Pasha expressed a hearty enthusiasm for the plan to open the Red Sea trade, and arranged a second interview in order that the scheme could be gone over in detail At their second meeting Buckingham presented Mehemet Ali with a hydrographic map of the Red Sea and described to him the physical factors which made its navigation difficult To the wonderment of the Pasha, the captain explained how the tides, the trade winds, and coral reefs, in combination with the extreme narrowness, closed it to larger sailing vessels during half the year Mehemet Ali was particularly pleased when Buckingham wrote upon the map in Arabic the names of the various cities and countries He offered to do everything in his power to make the venture a success and commissioned Buckingham to

⁸ *Autobiography*, II, 278.

negotiate for him directly with the merchants of Bombay, the first object of his desire was a fully caparisoned elephant

After these conversations Mehemet Ali returned to the war, and Buckingham turned his face toward India

In October, 1814, the wandering sailor left Cairo as a member of a great caravan of pilgrims bound for Mecca. Boghoz had taken good care to place him under the immediate protection of "Bonaparte," as the prince of the caravan proudly called himself. The caravan was accompanied by thirty of the most beautiful women of the Pasha's harem, who besides making the pilgrimage were going to give delight to their lord when the labours of war bore too heavily upon him. The women travelled in wheeled carriages with closely veiled windows, through which from time to time the appreciative captain caught glimpses of young and pretty faces.

At Suez the pilgrims, the harem, and the commercial envoy transferred to boats for the passage to Jeddah. To escape the crowding, the vermin, and worst of all the heat on the deck, Buckingham devised for himself a shelter, by means of a block and tackle he suspended himself over the stern of the boat in a rope net, where, divested of all clothing except the cotton drawers worn by the Arabs, he lay in the shadow of the boat and read. Occasionally, when the heat became insufferable, he lowered himself into the water. But such comfort was too good to last. Ten days before reaching Jeddah a sudden storm, the terror of the sailor's life in the Red Sea, struck the fleet. His ship was turned on its side, some twenty persons were thrown overboard, and many more suffered broken bones from being struck by the heavy baggage which was tumbled about. In the midst of the confusion the pilgrims fought with each other for space on the deck to kneel in prayer, and their lamentations were nearly as loud as the wailing of the wind. Buckingham escaped injury but lost his baggage, which included his spare clothing and all his instruments and papers except those which he carried on his person. Worse still was the exposure to the heat which he suffered, he became feverish and, when the fleet arrived in Jeddah, had to be carried ashore. He found shelter with Araby Jellamy, a native merchant and acting British consul, but without medical aid nature took a slow course to recovery. He did not become well again until he was taken on board the *Suffeenu'l-Russool*, whose commander, Captain Boog, gave him English food. How the sick sailor appreciated chicken broth!

Upon reaching Bombay Buckingham presented himself to John Leckie, the agent of Briggs and Company, and laid before him Lee's scheme for opening communications with Alexandria by way of Suez. But neither Leckie nor the other merchants to whom the envoy addressed himself would risk consigning goods or ships to the ports of the Egyptian Pasha, whom they universally mistrusted. They gave Buckingham to understand that they would engage in no trading operations by way of the Red Sea without treaty guarantees.

Bombay was pleasant. There were parties, excursions, and long conversations with English companions. And letters could be sent home with some assurance that they would reach their destinations. He wrote to his friends and sent a memento to his wife, "To My Best Beloved, with a Vase of Egyptian Rose-Dew."

Go! then companion of my way,
 Round smiling Hope's high Southern Horn,
 Go! to exhale thy sweets away,
 Upon a fairer bosom borne,
 And if that bosom's rising swell
 Shall greet thy first warm pressure there,
 Dear and complete will be the spell
 That hung on Love's remembered tear!⁹

After the failure of his negotiations with the merchants he looked about for an opportunity to stay in India and found one in an offer to take command of the *Humayoon Shah*, a vessel engaged by the Imaun of Muscat in the China trade. When the report of his appointment spread about the city, others who had sought the place raised the law against him. Under the Charter Renewal Act of 1813 Englishmen who came to India without a license issued by the Board of Directors of the East India Company were to be sent to England if they did not depart of their own accord. Buckingham appealed his case to the authorities, but, although not unsympathetic, they were unwilling to permit him to remain until an application for a license could be dispatched to England. He refused the suggestion that he avoid all these difficulties by declaring himself an American. Fortune or misfortune, one hesitates to say which, saved him the charter passage to England by way of Cape Town, for he was permitted to return to the Red Sea on board a war vessel of the East India Company, which was just then leaving.

⁹ *Autobiography*, II, 358

Bombay for Mocha.¹⁰ He and Benjamin Babbington, who furnished the money for the voyage, slowly worked their way from Mocha to Suez in coasting boats

As soon as Buckingham reached Cairo, he lost no time in reporting to Lee and Mehemet Ali the reason for the failure of the scheme for the opening of the Indian trade. To meet the objections of the Bombay merchants, it was decided to draw up a commercial agreement specifying the conditions under which the trade was to be carried on. This agreement gave Lee and Buckingham a monopoly of such commerce as they might develop between Egypt and India. All ships or goods consigned to either of them were to be admitted free to the Red Sea ports. If goods were landed at Suez, they were to be transported to Cairo at the regular rate of two dollars per camel load, plus a three per cent *ad valorem* charge for insurance. If the goods were stolen or destroyed en route, the Pasha agreed to make good the losses. The import duties were reduced from ten per cent to three per cent, and the export duties were removed entirely. These regulations were to apply also to goods imported from England and Europe. If war broke out between Turkey and England, the Pasha undertook to provide protection for one full year after its beginning. Peter Lee signed the convention as a representative of Briggs and Company, and Buckingham attached to his signature the designation, "Agent for the commerce of India at Suez."¹¹

4 OVERLAND TO INDIA

Christmas must have been a day of sober memories for Buckingham. In 1810 he battled with death in a North Sea storm, in 1813 he was robbed in the desert east of Keneh, and in 1815 he left Alexandria by boat, bound for Soor—ancient Tyre—on the first leg of a journey, by way of Bagdad and Persia, to India. In spite of the friends, Thurburn, an agent of Briggs and Company, and Babbington, the companion of his return voyage from India, who wished him God's-speed, he was sad. What had two years of adventure and danger gained him? What would this new journey through strange lands bring him? More hazards certainly, but would it give wealth to pay his debts and support his family, which, but for the relatives in England, would have been in direst poverty? Did his

¹⁰ *India Office Records, Home Miscellaneous Series, 532*, document no. 1

¹¹ *Autobiography, II, 418*

wife believe him loving and constant as ever? Had she received the bottle of Egyptian rose-water? And he was returning to India. Perhaps he remembered how once, near Bombay, death had come so close that only a partition of reeds had saved his life. He was riding in a palanquin, borne by native carriers, when suddenly a tiger leaped out of the undergrowth, snarled loudly, and, with its tail high in the air, bounded over the ground toward the carriers and their burden. The men dropped their passenger and broke for the trees. He barely had time to close the shutters of the palanquin before the beast came up snorting. The tiger butted the box with his head, and the box rolled on its side. A second butt turned the palanquin bottom side up, where it rocked to and fro on its convex roof. Inside, Buckingham lay as if dead, and, outside, the tiger, foiled by the box, set up a terrible howl, long continued, before it finally slunk off in search of other prey. About midnight the carriers returned, accompanied by enough soldiers to have killed a dozen tigers, and, after apologizing for deserting their passenger, carried him home at great speed.

But James Silk was the kind of man to have hopes, no matter what the past had been or what the present offered, he was always willing to believe in the future. As he said good-bye to Babbington, he probably recalled his commission to this friend, who upon reaching England was to apply to the Directors of the East India Company for a license to permit James Silk Buckingham to reside in India. If on this occasion the merchants of Bombay were averse to trusting Mehemet Ali, he proposed to remain. And he was not without prospect, for Mohammed Ali Khan, agent of the Imaun of Muscat, had promised him, in case he ever returned, the command of a vessel. Nor was he so badly off for the present. The Pasha had given him a passport which established him as an official representative of the Egyptian government, and Lee had provided a letter of credit on Briggs and Company. But the ultimate success of the venture depended on his ingenuity in escaping the dangers of the road and on his skill in convincing the Bombay merchants that Mehemet Ali was an honest man.

The situation which he found on the boat quickly called for his attention, and sadness gave way to anxiety for his immediate safety.¹²

¹² The materials for the following discussion of Buckingham's experiences in Palestine and Syria are found in his *Travels in Palestine* (London, 1821) and *Travels among the Arab Tribes* (London, 1825).

The boat was overloaded, and the crew, made up of Greek Christians, saw evil omens in everything. The candle on the shrine went out. The cook stirred the rice with a greasy spoon (every one who ate the defiled food committed a cardinal sin). And there was a heretic on board. When the crew insisted on taking the ship back to port, only Buckingham's threat to report them to the British consul prevented the outbreak of a mutiny.

At the end of a week they were only off Damietta, becalmed at that, and with one water cask alone remaining unopened. The firewood gave out, no food nor coffee could be cooked, and discomfort was immeasurably increased by legions of vermin. When a sudden storm broke the calm, the crew was thrown into a fit of superstitious piety. Each sailor ran about crossing himself, pointing to the five wounds of Jesus, and kissing the pictures of saints, to make more certain of safety they collected a sum of money which, with prayers and lamentations, they tied to the tiller. The storm passed as quickly as it had come. Dead calm returned, and with it came more hocus-pocus. As an offering to the gods of the winds, the sailors set fire to a straw mat and dropped it overboard, together with a piece of a map. The mat burned, and the map floated away. Every omen was favourable. But the witchery worked too well, for out of the calm came another storm, even more terrifying than the preceding one. The sailors again called upon all the saints and angels to save them, but this time, instead of rushing about the deck, they huddled into the ship's one cabin, where they were nearly suffocated. In the emergency the former captain seized the tiller and, with one Turkish boy to carry out his commands, navigated the ship. To give the vessel stability everything that was movable was tied down, including the passengers, and to increase the buoyancy an old iron anchor and part of the cargo were thrown overboard. The ship rode the storm until a lull permitted it to be brought into anchorage at Soor.

As soon as the future "distinguished Oriental traveller" landed, he discovered that Syria was a strange country. The countenances which he saw in the streets appeared more cunning and more ferocious than the mild and simple faces with which he had grown familiar in Egypt. More astonishing still was the enthusiasm which greeted him, as he went about the city searching for the local pasha from whom he wished to secure a firman for his inland journey, a crowd gathered at his heels and followed him to an inn where its

members made merry in his honour. To his amazement, when the crowd had finished its feast and departed, the proprietor presented the bill to him. When he finally paid half the sum, the inn-keeper was so grateful that he kissed the hand which counted out the coins.

The local pasha turned out to be an elusive official. At Soor he was reported to be at Acre, and there it was said that he had gone to Jerusalem. The country was in a general state of confusion, and travelling without a firman was dangerous. Buckingham reached Nazareth without molestation and found shelter in a Franciscan monastery. Next day when he attempted to go into the Holy City, he was attacked near Mt. Tabor, but by sharp riding he escaped and turned back in the direction of Joppa, only to be plundered of his provisions. At Joppa he hired an armed guard, with whom he was able to cross over to Jerusalem.

When he went to a monastery for shelter the monks eyed him coldly and refused him admittance until he produced a letter of introduction from the Franciscans at Nazareth, who described him as "*Milord Inglese richissimo, affabliissimo ed dottissimo*" The monks were accustomed to housing wayfarers, particularly those persons of distinction who came to the sacred city, and it happened that at the very time Buckingham sought their hospitality one of England's aristocratic sons was beneath their roof. They sent the new arrival to sleep in the same room with this gentleman—William John Bankes, Jr., of a lineage from Plantagenet times, Cambridge graduate, Tory, friend of Byron, and an aspiring traveller—and strange as it may seem the wandering sailor and the highborn tourist found each other congenial company. At the end of four days they were exploring the city together, and in ten they were ready to depart on a journey to Damascus.

The first leg of the journey was an excursion to the ruins of Jerash on the edge of the desert to the east of Jerusalem. The first night they slept in a cattle shelter; the second they spent in the open, the third was made comfortable by the hospitality of some desert Arabs. On the fourth day they sighted the ruins, but in order to avoid the suspicions of the watchful natives, who believed that the great stones hid a fabulous treasure which was guarded by a large desert bird that returned to the ruins every eight days, the travellers inspected the site most cautiously. By concealing himself among some fallen columns, Bankes succeeded in making a few

drawings That night they went on to a village where they found every one thoroughly distrustful When Buckingham wrote out his notes for the day, he assured a woman who saw him that he was only addressing a prayer to the newly risen moon In the morning it was raining, and the guides refused to depart With the day before them the disguised travellers, on the pretext of hunting for a knife which Bankes had lost, worked their way back to the ruins, where one of them with the aid of his compass made a ground plan of the most imposing remains, and the other, as was his skill, made sketches Upon returning to the village, they found the natives still more distrustful, for during the day Bankes's horse had died, and the death of a horse was the sign of Allah's displeasure When Bankes disrobed to dry his clothing, his fine calico drawers belied the poverty of his outer garments, and the suspicions increased That night while their clothing dried, they slept on mats beside the fire—naked

At daybreak they set out for Oom Kais, which was built on the ruins of ancient Gamala By dismounting alternately, the guides made it possible for Bankes to ride They met no trouble until nightfall, when an old sheik questioned them sharply about their papers Next morning they inspected the ruins and prepared to separate, Bankes to return with the guides to Nazareth and Buckingham to go on alone to Damascus But the plan fell out As Buckingham was setting off, his horse stumbled, throwing him on some rocks and so injuring his leg that he could not rise The natives carried him back to Nazareth where, nursed by the kindly Franciscans, he recovered his strength

After a week's delay James Silk set out for Damascus by a route to the eastward, which skirted the desert and ran through Assalt He hired a guide and adopted the disguise of a poor Arab as a means of avoiding the dangers of the road They crossed the valley of the Jordan, whose every aspect was sufficient to tempt to robbery and murder They passed the night with a Bedouin tribe During the night a storm beat down many tents, killed several young children and animals, and scattered their bodies about the camp On the second day the traveller paid tribute to a wandering band of marauders, on the third he had a set-to with a gang of cattle thieves But his disguise was effective, and he was cautious, at every village he took good care to perform his religious duties, going to the mosque, removing his slippers, and praying in the

customary manner The disguise also involved him in activities much less pious It was the custom of the Arabs to spend the evening gambling, and Buckingham, feeling that safety lay in playing his rôle completely, joined the games At Assalt he lost his woollen coat, inasmuch as it was winter and snow covered the ground, this was a major disaster And he did not dare to buy another to have done so would have been to admit that he had money, which would have brought innumerable demands for fees and gifts, if not actual exposure to robbery But on the night that the loss occurred, he did not miss the garment, for he and his guide slept in a peasant's house with a widow and her seven children They lay on the floor with the widow in the middle, Buckingham and the guide on either side and the children on the outer edges, and, according to his own account, the widow rolled much in her sleep, so that they often pressed closer on each other than was originally intended

Meanwhile Bankes's plans had miscarried After various adventures in the Jordan valley, he made Acre, where he hoped to find a safer route to Damascus along the coast At one time he considered cutting across the country toward the east to find his former companion He wrote to Buckingham about making the crossing, but was prevented from attempting it by failure to find a guide willing to risk the dangers

In his movements around Assalt Buckingham again visited Jerash and, as usual, found difficulty in taking notes After the first voyage to Smyrna he had begun a journal, and not even his wanderings about Egypt had broken its continuity He kept a more or less detailed record to show his family, if he should ever get back to England Before leaving Alexandria for the overland journey to India, he made preparations for recording his adventures by equipping himself with specially made notebooks about four inches square, small enough to be hidden in his clothing Everywhere he found instruments, papers, and writing suspect The illiterate natives believed that every one who could write was a sorcerer or a magician, beyond Assalt a sheik accused him of being a magician and tried to seize his instruments His guide thought him able to discover precious stones by means of incantations.

After leaving Assalt Buckingham turned northward to work his way to Damascus Fleas and bandits hindered his progress, but finally on March 21, 1816, he passed through "the Gate of God" into the city Bankes arrived the next evening.

Happy at their reunion the travellers enthusiastically compared notes. They read the sailor's journal, they admired the Cambridge man's sketches, and, in the fever of their excitement, they talked of a co-operative work of travels and wrote to Burckhardt to ask his opinion of the project. Thus was born Buckingham's idea of becoming an author. The two friends spent the remainder of the week in exploring Damascus, visiting its baths, mosques, and bazaars, wandering through its streets, and listening to its gossip.

At the same time they prepared for the journey to Aleppo. As before, they planned to travel separately in order to see more of the country, and, as before, Bankes departed first, and Buckingham was delayed. He came down with a fever. A French doctor, who advanced him a thousand piastres on his letter of credit, pulled him through, and in a week he was able to set off for the seat of Lady Hester Stanhope where he could rest and recover his strength.

Lady Hester was one of the eccentrics of the age. Brilliant rather than beautiful, she had made her way by cleverness and insight. William Pitt, of whose household she was mistress for a time, declared that if she decided to cheat the devil she could do it, on one occasion she was clever enough to get the great premier to appear in a burnt-cork black face make-up. Upon his death, which shattered her prospects in England, she gathered a small group of friends and set sail for the Levant, where she made a grand entry into Jerusalem. Later, through political influence, she acquired lands on the slope of Mt Lebanon and, by a capacity for intrigue and a recklessness in action, she became a veritable desert Amazon, the importance of whose power was not to be disregarded in the generally disorganized society of Syria. Her establishment, a medieval castle-like structure with a large garden, became a rendezvous for travellers, wayfarers, and needy of all sorts. She reserved her disfavour for England's consuls, whom she despised for their bourgeois ways.

Both Buckingham and Bankes enjoyed her hospitality. The former remained with her a week and won her friendship; the latter visited her several times and was insulted upon his final departure. As was the practice among the local sheiks, she gave letters of introduction to the various potentates round about. With a desert chieftain she had an agreement which ran, "If there comes to me a great man, on whom I can rely, and whose word you can trust as my own, who wants to live among you, to see your mock fights, or

a camel killed and eaten, to ride on a dromedary in his housings, I will send him with two seals, but if he be another kind of person I will send him with one" Bankes, having learned of this agreement, asked for a letter and, when she gave it to him, opened it—only to find one seal.¹³ The lady was noted for insight into character.

A month after leaving the desert princess, Buckingham arrived in Aleppo. On account of the disorders in the country he had taken a circuitous route by way of Beirut, Baalbeck, Tartoose, and Antioch, but wherever he went Lady Hester's name opened doors for him, and the gifts which she sent with him for the local potentates along the way made him welcome. Storms and more fleas proved to be the only serious discomforts he encountered.

But Aleppo gave James Silk a cold reception, in fact he entered the city under a threat of arrest. When he had drawn on his letter of credit in Damascus, the bill for the thousand piastres had been presented to the British consul at Aleppo, a Mr Barker, who refused to honour it. Barker declared the letter of credit a fraud and its bearer an impostor, and issued a warrant for his arrest. Only Lady Hester Stanhope's influence had saved Buckingham from seizure on the road. As soon as he reached Aleppo, he went to Barker in an effort to clear up the matter, but the consul was obdurate and refused to see him. As usual a half-mob of native idlers gathered, and they took pleasure in pointing him out as a suspected person when he went to the khan to await the arrival of Bankes with his baggage, which contained the letter of credit. As soon as Bankes arrived, he went to Barker to assure him that his friend was reliable. The consul then sent for Buckingham, who refused to budge a step, instead, he unpacked the letter of credit and sent it to Barker, who was compelled to admit its genuineness. As an apology, Barker came to the khan with his entire official retinue and invited Buckingham to accept his hospitality. The two travellers then spent the better part of a week at the consul's country house.¹⁴

At last the companions were to part for good. Bankes, having learned that he had inherited a legacy in England, made ready for a final excursion to Palmyra. He urged Buckingham to accompany him, but the latter, not having fallen heir to anything nor having received any other good news, was not to be turned further from

¹³ Catherine L. W. Primrose, *Life and Letters of Lady Hester Stanhope* (London, 1914), 148.

¹⁴ *The Calcutta Journal*, VI (1822), 707.

his proper course One matter remained to be arranged between them The only written record of Bankes's travels was in the letters which he had sent to Buckingham, and these he now asked to have returned All were given back but one which could not be found As a last act of kindness the English gentleman gave the wandering sailor a letter of recommendation to Sir Evan Nepan in Bombay¹⁵

Buckingham left Aleppo disguised as "a very insignificant Arab," attached to the party of a Mohammedan merchant who was returning to Mosul from a third pilgrimage to Mecca¹⁶ The entire caravan counted some four hundred camels, one hundred asses and horses, and three hundred persons Desert Bedouins did not dare to attack such a band But the heat, hailstorms, and swarms of scorpion-like flies made life almost unbearable And the ever-trailing horseman, just in sight on the horizon, was a reminder that plunderers were not far away

To have escaped both robbery and tribute in such a country was impossible One morning after an all-night march the caravan suddenly came upon the camp of a band of Turcomans, whose chief immediately demanded money to prevent, he said, his men from robbing the caravan Twenty piastres were levied on each camel, fifteen on each horse, and ten on each ass The merchants were assessed one thousand Spanish dollars and the pilgrims fifteen hundred piastres When Buckingham was ordered to pay one thousand piastres, he protested that he did not have so much money But a threat to rifle his saddle bags, which contained letters, a thermometer, a compass, notebooks, and a large number of gold pieces silenced him, and he borrowed the required sum from the Mohammedan merchant

At Mardin the traveller left the caravan to ride with Turkish couriers, who were bound for Mosul and Bagdad

All this occurred in the opening weeks of the Mesopotamian summer The peasants gathered wheat by pulling it up by the roots, beautiful Mohammedan maidens stole away secretly (but not too secretly) to bathe in hidden pools, and the sun fired the atmosphere to a heat of 120° in the shade Now the wandering sailor had no need for the woollen coat he had lost in Assalt

As was his practice upon entering a new city, James Silk spent

¹⁵ *Travels in Palestine*, appendix, 642

¹⁶ On the journey from Aleppo to Bagdad see *Travels in Mesopotamia* (London, 1827)

the first half-day in Mosul at the baths He had learned to enjoy not only the cleanliness of a Turkish bath but also the sensual pleasures of the rubbing, twisting, and massaging at which the Turks were so skilful After making his toilet, he called upon the local sheik and was entertained fittingly In the evening he was invited to a Greek Christian feast, which, as usual, turned into a debauch After getting drunk the Christians spent the evening assessing the charms of various females in particular and all females in general and in deriding the Mohammedans The drinking, licentiousness, and bigotry disgusted the guest, who had found that the chief excellence of the Christian over the Mohammedan was his capacity for becoming intoxicated

Two days later when the caravan came up, the "most insignificant Arab" settled accounts with the Mohammedan merchant who had watched over him during the early part of the journey from Aleppo. He also attended the banquet which the merchant gave to celebrate his safe return from the pilgrimage The entertainment was little more than a gaudy parade of wealth, not untarnished, for that matter, by a dicker which well exemplified the methods by which the merchant's fortune had been accumulated In the course of the evening he bought Buckingham's horse for about half the price it would have brought in a public bazaar Too late the traveller remembered the proverb which this same merchant had once quoted, "If thy neighbour has been once to Mecca, suspect him, if twice, carefully avoid him, but if three times, make haste to remove from near his habitation "

Next day Buckingham left for Bagdad on a horse-killing, man-breaking journey He and an Arab merchant, Suleiman, rode with the couriers Horses were changed at successive posts, and, if necessary, armed escorts accompanied the riders from station to station When it came time to set out, Jonas, the chief of the couriers, was nowhere to be found He was dallying with a newly acquired wife —his fourth, he had one in Aleppo, another in Mardin, and a third in Bagdad—an arrangement which Buckingham thought was wellnigh perfect Although Jonas was slow in starting, once he overtook his companions, he set a furious pace

The heat was stifling The bare brown earth, the haze-filled sky, and the burning sun made a furnace of the valley Even the natives suffered, and the couriers adopted a schedule of night-riding. By changing horses the riders kept going from midday until morning,

when they broke their pace for a sleep until noon, followed by another night's ride. When they awakened after their second forenoon's sleep, Jonas was gone, having deserted the travellers and abandoned the official packets to the other courier, with the only available fresh horse he had set out alone for Bagdad. Buckingham thought that he must have been anxious to see the fourth wife.

The desertion of Jonas stranded Suleiman and Buckingham, whose only hope was to attach themselves to a caravan. After an all-day search they found a merchant who was going to Bagdad. He furnished them with mules, and at nightfall they were again on the road. They stopped six hours later at Kara Tuppe, where, as was customary, they went to a mosque to sleep. Unfortunately for Buckingham, the priest placed his mat in the most sacred spot of the mosque, and in the morning he was awakened by the sound of angry voices. The priest and Suleiman were defending him against Habeeb, the merchant, and a mullah who charged him with violating the sanctuary. When the caravan made ready to move, Habeeb, influenced by the sleek mullah, deprived him of the mount he had been riding and gave him an obstinate pack mule instead. When Buckingham perched himself upon the loaded animal, the Moslems, amused by its refractory antics, mocked him.

This was one of the few times when Buckingham's adherence to the Moslem faith was questioned, his fair skin, although darkly tanned, and his irregularities in praying had aroused the suspicions of the mullah. Usually the Arabs thought him a true believer, although they often speculated about his particular sect.

As the train moved down the valley, the heat grew more intense, and Buckingham soaked his clothes at every water-hole. But he secured little relief, for the fever was upon him again. The Moslems continued their pestering, and the mule its stubbornness. Late in the afternoon of the second day when they stopped at a ditch, a Dervish, excited against the transgressor by the mullah, pricked the mule in the flank, causing it to upset its rider and kick off its load. Unmindful of Buckingham's predicament, the caravan moved on. When he tried to repack the animal, it got away, and only the timely aid of some friendly peasants made it possible for him to start again. But his misfortunes were not yet at an end. His attempt to add the pleasure of an evening pipe to his lonely ride again frightened the mule, which reared and fell over backward on him. One wonders just what a sailor would say in such a situation.

Unable to remount, he was forced to limp his way along the rock-strewn trail, leading the mule by the halter. At Hebjeb he caught up to the caravan, which had stopped for the night. The intolerant Moslems taunted him "Thus does God punish those who violate the sanctuaries of the prophet."

Next day the mule again prevented him from keeping up with the caravan, and he arrived at the gates of Bagdad a few hours after it had entered the city. When the guards demanded that he account for the goods on the mule, he replied that they belonged to a native merchant, but the guards refused to allow him to pass the gate until the owner came to claim his property. There was nothing to do but wait, and, keeping a tight hold on the mule's halter, the weary traveller sat down cross-legged in the sand and lighted his pipe. But no sooner had he touched it to his lips, than a Turkish soldier snatched it away. Enraged at this insult, James Silk jerked a pistol from his girdle, threatened to shoot anyone who approached him, and strode through the gate.

Buckingham was hospitably received by Claudius James Rich, an agent of the East India Company and a British consul, who sheltered him while he was down with a fever contracted on the road from Mosul. After his recovery the summer heat prevented a descent to Bussorah, and he decided to go through Persia to Bushire, where he hoped to find a ship that would carry him to Bombay.

In addition to commercial and political activities, Rich found time to explore the ancient ruins which dotted the region to the west and south of Bagdad. Under his inspiration Buckingham spent a week among these mounds, visiting those which at that time were variously known as the walls of Babylon, the Hanging Gardens, and the Tower of Babel, and when his descriptions of them were published, they were sufficiently clear and detailed to be considered a contribution to archaeological knowledge as it then existed. Particularly noteworthy was his description of Aquarquf, afterwards identified as the Babylonian city of Dur-Kurigalzu, he also was the first to make out the exact stage-like construction of the Babylonian temples, now known as ziggurats. Buckingham was not a specialist in archaeology, but he was sufficiently versatile to comprehend the essentials of both its problems and its methods. When he recorded his experiences among the Babylonian ruins, he expressed the view that excavation would clear up the controver-

sies which at that time raged about the nature of the remains And he never lost interest in archaeological research One of his last books was a work describing the discoveries of Layard at Nineveh The name of the wandering sailor belongs not only on the roll of those who rediscovered the Ancient East, but also among those writers who awoke the nineteenth century to an interest in archaeological research¹⁷

Early in September, 1816, Abdjee Abdullah ibn Suleiman min Massr, set out from Bagdad by caravan for Persia¹⁸ If dress indicated status, he was a middle-class Arab of Egyptian descent and not unused to the ways of the road He was well armed with a lance some fifteen feet long, two pistols, and a Damascus blade and was accompanied by a servant whom he called Hadjee Ismail. Although Hadjee was of little account as a tender of horses or as a cook, he was a fine interpreter and familiar with poetry, of which his favourite line was, "Ah! how hard it is to have one's heart divided between Philosophy and Love!" The servant had vowed to follow his master to the very depths of the underworld The caravan was made up of poor pilgrims, some fifty or sixty in number, who were returning from an unsuccessful journey to Mecca They had been plundered in the desert and were destitute To recoup his losses, one of the most holy of the pilgrims stole Abdjee Abdullah's Koran

The trail led to the north-east Camels were to be seen feeding in the Tigris valley, and trees appeared in the openings between the brown hills, beyond which towered ridges of cold blue mountains At night an east wind, the breath of the highlands, made those accustomed to the heat of the valley shiver Where the road led over the hills one made out in the distance the villages of the Koord herdsmen, the black haircloth tents shining in the sunlight like the glint of obsidian In the valleys were cultivated lands Ripe melons lay in the gardens, vines hung laden with grapes—

The grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring sects confute

¹⁷ *Travels in Mesopotamia*, II, 395-495, J. S. Buckingham, *The Buried City of the East—Nineveh* (London, c. 1851) See also *Cambridge Ancient History*, I, 122, H. V. Hilprecht, *Exploration in the Bible Lands during the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1903), 30, and R. W. Rogers, *A Short History of Babylonia and Assyria* (2 vols., 6th ed., New York, 1915), I, 148 et seq

¹⁸ On the excursion into Persia see *Travels in Assyria, Media, and Persia* (London, 1829)



BUCKINGHAM IN ARABIAN COSTUME
From *Travels in Assyria, Media, and Persia*, (1829)

—and ripe pomegranates showed brilliantly in the trees, through which magpies fluttered as they chattered old familiar sounds The dangers of the road became fewer On one occasion a wandering band of Arabs, having abandoned their herds for a time to the care of the women, attacked the little cavalcade, but they were driven off by a display of arms Although the trail became rougher and steeper as the caravan penetrated the mountains, the journey to Kermanshah was not difficult The pilgrims enlivened the march with songs of love and passion

From Kermanshah the course of “the pilgrim Abdullah, the son of Solomon of Egypt,” and his servant, the philosophizing Dervish, led by way of Ispahan and Shiraz to Bushire on the Gulf

Beyond Hamadan, where “Sir Pilgrim” was down three days with a fever, there were no wayside khans, and the travellers found shelter wherever they could They spent one night in a cave, another with a peasant woman, who housed them with her cattle, and still others in the open On such occasions they made the cold nights comfortable by lighting great fires As they climbed the mountains toward Ispahan, the cold grew more intense, and frequently there was rain The camels had heavy shaggy coats, and the mountaineers wore great sheepskin jackets, which the Egyptian found too expensive to purchase How far away seemed over-heated Bagdad, how far away the pleasant Cornish hills!

Ispahan, with its minarets and towers of the ancient fire worshippers—all circled by countless pigeons—entertained the pilgrim and his servant for a week

They then turned southward in the direction of the sea The mountain trails were more unfrequented than before, only occasional caravans broke the loneliness The travellers encountered a train laden with grain, another which was bringing in a band of criminals, and still another which was bearing a corpse to a distant burial ground Sometimes the loneliness was accompanied by hunger At Korambad they found no food except bread and water, but in Shiraz they enjoyed fine provisions, especially fruits, at low prices At Bushire the pilgrim showed surprising interest in the British consul and the squadron of the East India Company’s war vessels which lay in the harbour, in fact he dismissed his servant and took passage as an Egyptian merchant bound for Bombay

One more adventure awaited the wandering sailor before he arrived at his destination On the way down the Gulf when the

squadron anchored off Ras-el-Khyma for the purpose of punishing pirates who had seized some English goods in the Red Sea, he acted as an interpreter in the negotiations which the commodore carried on with the pirate chief. When the English failed to receive a satisfactory answer to their demands, the fleet bombarded the town. The naval guns kicked up sand on the shore, the shot from the pirates' batteries fell splashing in the sea, and a European with a weak heart fell dead from fright.

After this fiasco the squadron crossed to Muscat, and the Egyptian merchant transferred to a trader. He arrived in Bombay December 16, 1816, nearly a year after the departure from Alexandria.

5 BABYLON THE TRADITIONAL CIVILIZATION

Breaking camp in the glow of the morning, following the flocks by day, and baking bread over dung fires in the evening, the Bedouins lived as Abraham had in ancient times, and the villagers of Palestine appeared as if they had stepped alive from the pages of the Bible. Buckingham complained that the Europeans who depicted Joseph and Mary in robes of scarlet portrayed them falsely. He observed that the ways of life in the Near East were old, in fact, they were much older than he or anyone in his time supposed. For the masses of field-workers, herdsmen, and craftsmen the daily routine varied little from what it had been since the beginnings of settled life. Gods, kings, empires, and cities had risen from the dust and returned again to it, but the fundamental patterns of culture had altered little, less in seventy centuries than European culture was to change during the seven decades of Buckingham's life.

Babylon, Manchester, and Utopia whoever knows these, comprehends the range of experience for the masses as it has been in the past, as it is in the present, and as it is hoped for in that future society which social reformers have never ceased to wish for. In such a sweeping view, one ought to glance at Athens, Rome, and New Jerusalem, but the closer one sees Athens and Rome the more they look like Babylon, and New Jerusalem is certainly less earthly, if not less objective, than Utopia. For the student of the history of civilization, Buckingham's first-hand experiences in the traditional order of civilization shape a background against which those striking developments of the early nineteenth century stand out most

clearly, either as they were projected in the benevolent and ideal visions of the social reformers or wrought in the gross and realistic changes generated by machinery Buckingham came to *Utopia* by way of *Babylon* and *Manchester*, and it is well for the student to come to him and the social reformers as a group by the same route

As of old, "the shining Nile" brought its bounty to Egypt Buckingham found it "scarcely possible to describe in too glowing colours the riches and fertility of the soil" over which he passed in his excursions along its valley

All around us, seemed one wide garden, crossed and intersected with a thousand meandering rivulets, (for such the smallest of their serpentine canals appeared,) strewed with groves, and fields, and flocks, and hamlets, teeming with abundance The fruits of the earth were seen in perfection,—the season of the harvest and seed time, the ploughing and the watering all existing together at the same period of the year ¹⁸

It was the same Egypt which Herodotus had described twenty-three hundred years before But in the towns and hamlets the modern traveller "met with no single object to gratify the heart or the imagination, everywhere dirty alleys, mud-walled huts, sickly children, and filthy and ragged parents" And bread was kneaded with unclean hands, after the manner reported by his Ionian predecessor

Buckingham's pictures of the fellahin, their hovels, domestic life, and employments leave little to the imagination

Their huts were only walled dung-hills, in which single enclosure, without bed, mat, or covering of any kind, lay frequently a family of eight or ten in number on the damp earth, to which might be added the occasional visits of sheep, goats, fowls, pigeons, fleas, and mosquitoes

Some of the families, who are here always their own builders, being too poor and hard pressed to spare the time necessary for raising mud walls, had formed enclosures of tall reeds, placed perpendicularly, and secured by a grass ligature running along them about midway up their height, the whole supported in this erect position by slopes of earth thrown upon each side of their roots These enclosures were without roof, door, or window, a small space in one of their sides being left open for admission, their general size was about twelve feet square

¹⁸ *The Oriental Herald*, XXI (1829), 222, J S Buckingham, "Voyage on the Nile, from Cairo to the Cataracts"

and their reed walls so low that the heads of the family within could be seen over them whenever they stood up. In one of them we counted a mother, her married daughter, two boys, and four girls, all under twelve years of age, and all naked, besides which were a young heifer the foal of an ass, and about a dozen hens and pigeons, although there remained yet to be added to this circle, the father of the family, the husband of the daughter, and the parent ass, all of whom were expected to return from labour after sunset, to repose together within these walls!

The mother was cooking a dourra cake upon the dying embers of a cow-dung fire, on which she blew violently with all the force of her breath, the married daughter, in an advanced state of pregnancy, was pounding millet between two pieces of granite-stone, while one of the little naked girls mixed it into paste, and a younger brother fed the fire with the dried cakes of another kind, the two of the little boys, from four to six years old, were fighting with great obstinacy, to decide a quarrel which had taken place between themselves, when, one of them thrusting the other toward his mother, both of them were thus thrown upon the fire, and partially burnt, and the youngest girl of all, who sat calmly * * * * not half a pace from the scene of action, seeing the fire thus scattered by this accident, and being desirous of restoring it, gathered all the fragments together, and placing these, covered with a little chopped straw, on the whole, unhappily completed its extinction beyond all hope of rekindling it.

The males, from the age of ten to twenty, were all employed in the cultivation of the ground, and watering it from the Nile, the females between the same ages, in carrying burthens, and in the performance of all inferior offices of labour, for their husbands or fathers, and the children, from the moment of their walking alone, until the period of their being capable of assisting in the duties of the field, were occupied in collecting the dung of animals, while yet warm on the earth, and moulding it into cakes, which, being dried in the sun, forms their only fuel. The whole property of these oppressed and degraded beings, moveable and immoveable, seldom exceeds, for a whole family, the amount of twenty piastres—less than a guinea sterling. Of furniture or utensils, they have none beyond a kettle for cooking, some large jars for water, and a few vessels for butter, milk, &c. The husband is well clad if he can produce a coarse brown goat's hair shirt of his own weaving, and a white cotton cap for the head, a simple blue chemise, with a square piece of the same kind thrown over the head, comprises all the wardrobe of the wife, and few of the children of either sex, before the age of eight or ten years, know anything of the burden of being dressed, or of wearing garments of any description ²⁰.

Such was the life of the fellahin in the early decades of the nineteenth century, and, in so far as there is any record of their life,

²⁰ *The Oriental Herald*, XX (1829), 404, XXI (1829), 35

thus it had been since the origins of civilization. The archaeological remains indicate that the original structures both in Egypt and in Babylonia were similar to the reed hovels described above, and, although the documents record little relative to the life of the ancient workers, that little describes an existence in no way different from that observed by Buckingham. For all that it mattered to them whether they worked the fields, piled up embankments about Alexandria, or surrendered their crops to their latest master, who regularly seized four-fifths of the grain, the five thousand years between Menes and Mehemet Ali might as well have been the rising of the sun and its setting on another day. Like the Nile, the desert, and the immobile visages on the great stone Pharaohs, time passed them by unchanged.

Egypt was a "den of slavery, guarded by brutal, ignorant, and unfeeling monsters," and its people, born to slavery, neither knew nor valued freedom. When Buckingham made these observations, one may rightly wonder whether he remembered the yokels of the Cornish countryside, who reared about the cultivated plots of ground those walls of earth and stone some eight feet thick and ten feet high. The English yokels, like the Egyptian fellahin, were the heirs of the ages, and for the common people that heritage had always been labour, tribute, and death. Eighteenth-century England, under the squirearchy, the Established Church, and the mercantilist monarchy, was not a great deal different from the Egypt of the Albanian adventurer—except for the influences of climate, which Buckingham would have been among the first to point out—or for that matter from the Egypt of Khafre or the Babylonia of Hammurapi. Clothing, food, and housing differed a little, gods and kings also, but in those things which, as Buckingham declared, were the essentials of civilization—"the development of the physical, moral, and intellectual faculties, and in their application to the social duties and well-being of life"²¹—the fellah and the yokel could have exchanged places without having experienced any considerable shock.

Throughout the Levant, Buckingham observed methods of labour no different from those depicted on the ancient monuments. When the Babylonian farmer went to the fields to break the soil for the planting, his tool was a pointed wooden beam held in the earth by a handle upon which he pressed with main strength, while his other

²¹ *The Oriental Herald*, XX (1829), 430.

arm prodded with a long goad the ambling oxen drawing the plough Except for an iron point on the share, the same implement, including the goad and the oxen, worked the fields in Buckingham's time And the seed was still sown over the rough furrows by hand Everywhere the women—barefooted, usually carrying the heavy burdens, and sure to be accompanied by one or two small children—were to be seen in the fields At harvest time the grain was cut with sickles, in Mesopotamia, Buckingham saw the still more primitive practice of pulling it up by the roots On the threshing-floor both oxen and horses were used to tramp out the ears Usually the grain was not winnowed from the chaff, and often the two were ground together into a flour from which the *dourra* cakes were made Except among the menials who frequently ate "mule feed"—boiled grain moistened with oil—these cakes, softened with a little honey and oil or butter, were the staple article in the popular diet

In some parts of Persia, Buckingham found the practices of tillage performed as well as in England, but there also he witnessed the common tragedy of the traditional rural world—crop failure and famine Outside of Hamadan the road was lined with straggling groups of wretched peasants, who, having abandoned their drought-stricken fields, were making their way to the city They were a pitiable sight The men and women, beside carrying a little bedding and a few cooking utensils, were burdened with the infants too small to walk The other children, some of them mere toddlers three and four years old, picked their way over the stones in a painful effort to keep up with their parents But Europe, as well as the East, knew famine and its consequences Had not bad harvests helped to fill Paris with those mobs of "empty bellies" whose madness had nearly overturned the social order of aristocrats and kings? Indeed, had not Buckingham in his early years saved the grain supply of Falmouth from the starving miners by an outburst of pious melody? Even in the most fertile regions of the earth the traditional civilization never succeeded in maintaining its food supply from year to year

Of that conflict between the tiller of the soil and the nomad, which has filled history with an almost endless series of conquests, oppressions, and empires, Buckingham saw many evidences. In Syria he observed peasants going to the fields armed with muskets; between Mardin and Mosul the caravan with which he was travelling

encountered a Wahabee horde which, having left the desert as summer came on, was devastating the fields as they drove their flocks of camels and mares from valley to valley. In one or two places he observed the nomads practising a little agriculture for themselves. The Egyptian Bedouins planted grain by making holes in the ground with a sharp stick, and the Koords of Persia went alternately from their fields in the valleys to the upland pastures as the seasons changed. But the desert peoples lived chiefly on their animals, depending upon plunder for supplies of grain and firearms.

The common nomads lived in small bands, sometimes consisting of no more than five or six families. East of Jerusalem, Buckingham encountered a band which must have duplicated all such groups since man claimed the desert for his home. The flocks of asses, goats, and young camels were driven by the men and boys, who followed them on foot. The older camels were laden with the camp equipment—tents, bedding, utensils, and panniers in which the young kids and small children were carried. The women trudged along beside the camels. Only the sheik—the patriarch—rode a horse, which, as did the entire train, held its pace in “harmony with the tardy movements of the camels.”

The traveller discovered life in the desert camps to be as simple as in the hovels of the fellahin. Everywhere the tents were of camel’s-hair cloth, about ten or twelve feet square, and supported by untrimmed boughs. Among the Turcomans and Koords of Persia, whose camps were more permanent than those of the Bedouins who moved daily, the sides of the tents were generally of reeds tied with grass so as to make a screen-like wall. Each tent housed a family—a man, usually two wives, and fifteen or more children. Although Buckingham enjoyed the hospitality of such camps on many occasions, he preferred to eat of his own meagre provisions in secret. He had learned to appreciate one bit of Solomon’s wisdom, “Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.” In more than one place he found tribes whose only food was the milk of mares and camels. For luxuries the nomads were content with dates and raw meat, which was commonly butchered from a camel so sick or so badly injured that it was ready to die.²²

Walls—often no more than piles of stones and mud—minarets,

²² *The Knickerbocker Magazine*, XI (1838), 153, 325, J. S. Buckingham, “Oriental Fragments”; *Travels in Assyria, Media, and Persia*, 46, 175.

domes, and a cosmopolitanism that contrasted sharply with the national uniformities which distinguished European cities, gave Buckingham the feeling that the Asiatic and African cities were "strange" and sometimes "grand" A few of them, particularly Suez, he thought mean and hardly worthy of the name "city", others such as Damascus and Aleppo he found gay and even clean, but not one of them inspired him to that extravagant enthusiasm which might have led him to burst out in praise after the manner of the patriotic Persian who declared, "The world is a vast sea, Khorassan is a fine oyster, and Herat is a pearl in the oyster"

Cairo with its "endless diversities of figures, dresses, complexions, religions, manners, and even languages" seemed more a "fairy enchantment than a reality", Bagdad showed him the full pageant of Oriental splendour By day the modern heir of Babylon was sombre like every Levantine city, not even the glittering many-hued tiles of the minarets and slender domes relieved the desolation of the narrow passages which served for streets Across these passages, glaring white beneath the midday sun, the yellow brick walls of the houses cast dark shadows Only tightly closed doors, opening into the courts upon which the houses faced, broke this endless masonry, which, blank and winding, made the streets seem more like an inescapable maze than like the thoroughfares of a world-famous city And for the greater part of the day, except in the Market of Muslims where the Arab merchants assembled and in the open spaces before the mosques where the unveiled country women hawked cucumbers and melons, few people were to be seen All who could leave their labour sought shelter from the heat in underground rooms

With nightfall the city changed As if by magic, idlers arrayed in rainbow colours filled the bazaars, from coffee-sheds came an aroma which blended with the odours of tobacco and perfume, there was a mingled harmony of strange chords and stranger tongues, while over all a multitude of flickering torches and swinging lamps cast a glow—sometimes yellow, sometimes orange—in contrast to which the shadows seemed black caverns in which might have been found all that was seductive and mysterious in Oriental life And "the voice of joy was heard on every side" it was night in Bagdad.

Among those performers who found their audiences in the street, except for the dancing bears, the professional story-tellers were the

most popular Often as many as several hundred persons gathered to hear the rendering of a tale, perfectly familiar but made new by the artistry of declamation If the speaker was skilful, the fury, indignation, supplication, wooing, and exultation with which he traced love and intrigue through incident after incident were answered by the crowd in moods and exclamations of its own— curses, tears, laughter, jeers, sighs, shouts, and silence, the latter sometimes as intense as that of the desert itself

Not infrequently the story-teller broke into song In other exhibitions no less interesting, music—the lazy thumping on little drums and the full-noted chords of Turkish guitars—also played a part Every inn kept a male dancer, whose lascivious performances would not have been tolerated in the West, caravans and the retinues of public officials and rich merchants were incomplete without one Women danced only in the harems or in more public houses of assignation where, if one was adept in the arts of intrigue, it was not impossible to meet the wives of the rich and the well-to-do The women dyed their hair and palms with henna and stained their lips a brilliant blue The most fastidious displayed bodies well tattooed from ankles to throat, each breast festooned with a garland of flowers Sailor-fashion, James Silk concluded that with such opportunities the career of an artist could not have been unattractive The most beautiful women and the least adorned with artificial allurements were the white Georgians and Circassians, they were reserved for the faithful For the unbelievers there were native women and their darker sisters from Abyssinia and Zanzibar

As a stranger to these Oriental diversions, Buckingham found more pleasure in viewing the general scene than in participating in the revelries The view which pleased him most was presented at midnight from the centre of the bridge of boats which spanned the Tigris

The morning breeze had so completely subsided, that not a breath was stirring, and the river flowed majestically along, its glassy surface broken only by the ripples of the boats' stems, which divided the current as it passed their line In this resplendent mirror was seen, reflected back, another heaven of stars, almost equal in brilliance to that which spread our midnight canopy, not a cloud veiled the smallest portion of this deep blue vault, so thickly studded with myriads of burning worlds The forked galaxy, with its whitened train of other myriads, too distant to be distinctly seen, formed a broad and lucid band across the zenith, and even the reflection of this milky way, as

belting the seeming heaven below us was most distinctly marked upon the bosom of the silent stream

The only persons seen upon the bridge, at this late hour of the night, were some few labourers, who, exhausted with the riot of the feast, had stolen into the bows of the boats, and coiled themselves away like serpents between the timbers, to catch there, undisturbed, the short repose which was necessary to fit them for to-morrow's burthens. The whole of the river's banks were illuminated as far as the eye could follow the Tigris in its course. The large coffee-house near the Madrassee el Mostaner, or College of the Learned so often mentioned in Arabian story, presented one blaze of light on the eastern side. The still larger one, opposite to this, illuminated by its lamps the whole western bank, and as these edifices were both facing the extremities of the bridge of boats, a stream of light extended from each completely across it, even to the centre of the stream, and on the surface itself were seen floating lighted lamps, and vessels filled with inflammable substances, to augment the general blaze ²²

Among Western men the common view of things Oriental has been similar to this scene, favourite of the wandering sailor—a romantic view blended of lights and the reflection of lights and seen through ripples of water and in the depths of heaven, which obscure rather than exhibit objectivity. Rich goods, exotic pleasures, mysteries within mysteries few Western men have discovered the poor devils asleep under Oriental bridges. And what romance has done for the Orient, it has done also for History, particularly that long past during which civilization developed in Egypt and Babylonia, the life that is History is like the life that is the Orient—obscured in splendour, mysticism, and indifference. Even as the common people did not enter into heaven in the early Egyptian religion, so also were they excluded from the history written under the traditional outlook of the Oriental mind.

Out of the past comes a caravan—call it fable, tradition, or history—and at its head ride the prince, the seer, and the rich merchant. But where are those who form their retinues? There is dust along the desert trail, and there is clamour in the city streets. Who makes them? The dust settles, and the clamour dies away, there is nothing, no one. To view with Buckingham the traditional figures at the head of the caravan, not in the glittering unreality of a night in Bagdad but in the hot light of the Oriental day, and to discover with him those who slept in the boats, as well as all those others who stirred the desert sands and made the noise of

²² *Travels in Mesopotamia*, II, 433

the street, is to view both the Orient and the traditional order of civilized society in a more objective manner

The caravan draws near.

Is it Sargon of Akkad, or David of Israel, or Suleiman of the Golden Horn, or the little Albanian who rides at the post of honour in this train that is at once the pageant of the Orient and the caravan of History? What does it matter? Whoever rides there, is one—irresponsible, despotic, licentious, greedy, gaudy in trappings, and cruel. Perhaps that pirate chieftain whom Buckingham saw at Bushire personified, as well as any one could, the political order and disorder that belongs both to the Orient and to the ages

His followers, to the number perhaps of two thousand, are maintained by the plunder of his prizes, and as these are most of them his own bought African slaves, and the remainder equally subject to his authority, he is sometimes as prodigal of their lives in a fit of anger, as he is of those of his enemies, whom he is not content to slay in battle only, but basely murders in cold blood, after they have submitted. An instance is related of his having recently put a great number of his own crew, who used mutinous expressions, into a tank on board, in which they usually kept their water, and this being shut close at the top, the poor wretches were all suffocated, and afterwards thrown overboard. Rahmahen-Jaber's [for that was his name] figure presented a meagre trunk, with four lank members, all of them cut and hacked, and pierced with wounds of sabres, spears, and bullets, in every part, to the number of more than twenty different wounds. He had, besides, a face naturally ferocious and ugly, and now rendered still more so by several scars there, and by the loss of one eye. When asked by one of the English gentlemen present, with a tone of encouragement and familiarity, whether he could not still dispatch an enemy with his boneless arm, he drew a crooked dagger, or yambeah, from the girdle around his shirt, and placing his left hand, which was sound, to support the elbow of the right, which was the one that was wounded, he grasped the dagger firmly with his clenched fist, and drew it backward, twirling it at the same time, and saying, that he desired nothing better than to have the cutting of as many throats as he could effectually open with this lame hand!¹²⁴

It is not in the historical record that any government has ever been too weak to be cruel. Buckingham observed that this figure was respected and cherished by the people, not alone on account of fear but also for his prowess in battle and success in pillage.

By the side of the prince is the seer, as often unkempt and in rags as in garments of purple and gold, for these two, since the very

¹²⁴ *Travels in Assyria, Media, and Persia* 356

beginning of civilization when priest and king were one, were ever and interchangeably the right hand and the left hand of power, and ever the one hand knew what the other was doing

Buckingham encountered many different types of the traditional intellectual class. Age binding youth to the past—the very old Moslem priest who directed boys in a monotonous and endless repetition of the Koran. Philosophical disputation justifying worldliness—the Dervish master of the poets who preached Plato, talked Socrates, and acted the vulgar Aristippus. Knowledge wasted in controversy—the Persian mullah who was ignorant of his country's boundaries but learned nevertheless in all the fine points of Soonneism and Sheeahism, as well as the doctrines of the Soofees and the more worldly arts of the manufacture of sweetmeats and caleoons. And piety reduced to absurdity—the pilgrim who, having lost his cup, went about praying in a loud voice, "In the name of God, the just and merciful. My cup is gone from me—it disappeared while I prayed at sunset. To whoever finds the same, may God lengthen out his life, may God augment his pleasures, and may God bring down affairs of business on his head." When the cup was not returned, the pilgrim found consolation in the utterance, "God knows where it is gone, but it is written in the heaven of old." This belief in the omniscience of the Deity and the destiny of Fate, as well as the manifestation of each in the minor incidents of daily life, was the innermost core of the power, which, since the star-gazers of Ur and the sun-seers of Heliopolis, had ever sustained the traditional intellectual class.

Except at rare intervals the priest, the philosopher, and the poet—the bearers of the high intellectual tradition of the ages—lost their heads in clouds of their own making, and for the masses the seers' wisdom became only an amazing ignorance.

The pageant of the Orient is nearer

Close behind the prince and the seer rides the merchant—rich in goods, slaves, and precious jewels, but neither powerful nor wise, at least not outwardly so, his are the skills of bargaining, deceit, and ingratiating, he is humble when necessary and arrogant as occasion permits, he is often plundered, but so accomplished in the devices of extortion is he that the little sums thus lost usually return multiplied many times. About him hangs little of the glamour and much of the envy of the prince, and the wisdom of the seer is beyond his knowledge or need, there is no needle's eye in the affairs

of this earth, and is not the entrance to heaven through the mouths of those fed by charity?

Buckingham met the merchant of the ages in his native Levantine home

Mallim Yusef seated himself with the greatest possible humility on the floor beneath us, at the feet of his superiors who occupied the sofa, first kneeling, and then sitting back while kneeling, on the heels and soles of his feet, in an attitude of most abject and unqualified humiliation. He was dressed in the most costly garments, including Cashmere shawls, Russian furs, Indian silks, and English broadcloth all, however, being of dark colours, since none but the orthodox Mohammedans are allowed to wear either green, red, yellow, azure, or white. Among the party was a Moslem dervish, with a patchwork and party-coloured bonnet of a sugar loaf shape, his body scarcely half covered with rags and tattered garments. [The merchant] who was by far the wealthiest and the most powerful of all present, who lived in the most splendid house in Damascus, and fed from his table more than a hundred poor families every day, who literally managed the great machine of government, and had influence enough, both here and at Constantinople, to procure the removal of the present bey from his post if he desired it, was obliged to kneel in the presence of those who could not have carried on the affairs of government without his aid, while the dervish, contemptible alike for his ignorance and arrogant assumption of superiority, was admitted to the seat of honour, and was served with coffee, sherbet and perfumes, and treated by the attendants with all the marks of submission and respect.²⁵

In the traditional civilization money, although often content without the prestige of place or the insignia of honour, always participated in the realization of power. The sword dazzled as it swept to power, the secret rite allured by its mystery, but the pound of flesh only emaciated its victims. The trafficker knew neither grandeur nor mystery; his power was generated in human vanity, want, and misery, made profitable by an intelligence which asserted acumen as its prime attribute and exhibited social indifference as its most prominent characteristic. From old Babylon came not only the forms, instruments, and devices of business but also the attitudes of mind which sublimated economic gain, extravagant luxury, and secret power wrought by the influence of money.

Again the caravan moves

And who follow these—prince, seer, and merchant—the tradi-

²⁵ *Travels among the Arab Tribes*, 320, 340

tional figures in the pageant of History? The multitude, the masses, the common people Through Buckingham's eyes one catches glimpses of the figures that wind in the pageant's long train, but to depict them one must resort to the device used by the most ancient artists in their representations of crowds—a line, a curve, a stroke here and there, no full figures, only the suggestion of individuals

The dust cloud and the clatter
 Packs of starving dogs Filthy children
 apparently as homeless as the dogs Women in grave yards,
 mourning Ass-drivers asleep beside corpses Dancing slave boys Public
 boys for nameless purposes Weavers at the loom Cursing ploughmen
 Lepers Riders of camels, swinging Skin-diseased faces Horsemen
 Reed hovels outside city walls Pilgrims Pilgrims Pilgrims Lamen-
 tations Women—bought, sold, veiled, tattooed, worked, worked
 worked, worked Women—dark, squalid,²⁶ haggard, harsh-tongued,
 blear-eyed, pregnant, old at thirty Naked criminals at the flogging
 post Men—soldiers, brigands, beggars, fakirs, sexless Careworn,
 miserable old men, not yet forty Boatmen, sailors Jewellers Slaves
 Bickering Money-counting Bread-measuring Prayers Prayers Lamen-
 tations Clatter and the dust cloud ²⁶

The caravan of History has passed by

If the Orient and History must be seen in the forms of night, let it be not through the glamour of a night in Bagdad, but in the life of the people as they turn away from the burdens of the day There is a song on the night air, "Ya, *Leila, Leila*," "Oh! night, oh! night" It is the Egyptian refrain as the stars set themselves above the ageless Nile "The captain insisted on mooring the boat, though no serious impediment existed to the navigation of the stream but in the East nothing is done in a hurry, time is deemed of little value, and custom is paramount above all reasoning" ²⁷ Thus the traditional civilization—*Babylon*—displayed in song and custom its age-old content: longing, mystery, and changeless being

Manchester . claims both the day and night for its labour . . . but what of its songs? And *Utopia* sings by day and by night who knows? At least, it is well for those who labour in *Manchester* to discover that there were songs in *Babylon*

²⁶ Buckingham's works of travel abound in incidental references to the life of the people of the countries through which he passed, some notable references are *Autobiography*, II, 333, *Travels among the Arab Tribes*, 143, 264, 316, 544, and *Travels in Assyria, Media, and Persia*, 171, 403

²⁷ *The Oriental Herald*, XXII (1829), 45, *Autobiography*, II, 170

6 THE *HUMAYOON SHAH*

Long before the "agent for the commerce of India at Suez" arrived in Bombay, the letters which he had dispatched from Soor, as soon as he discovered that his own progress was to be slow and uncertain, had reached their destination. They had been carried by the couriers who maintained communication between the British consuls in Syria, Mesopotamia, and the Persian Gulf. But neither the letters nor the commercial envoy found the Bombay merchants more hospitable than before to the Red Sea project. And with good reason. In 1815 when a vessel had embarked for Suez it was stopped at Jeddah, where the captain was forced to sell the cargo to native merchants and pay the customary duties of the port. These native traders were extremely jealous of their monopoly of the India trade and were supported by the Governor of the port, who shared in their gains, and Mehemet Ali, in spite of his pretensions, was chiefly interested in the trade as a source of immediate profits, either from the sale of goods or from the duties.²⁸ This combination of economic and political factors was too powerful to be broken by a simple agreement, unsupported by any government, between two individuals and an irresponsible political authority who was as ready to profit by exploiting the trade as he was by protecting it.

The wandering sailor was again in India and again without employment. But matters stood a little better than before, because his application to the Board of Directors of the East India Company for a license to reside in India as a "free mariner" had been granted. He had no fear of deportation,²⁹ and, when he applied to the agent of the Imaun of Muscat for the command of a vessel of which he had been deprived by his expulsion, Mohammed Ali Khan, true to his promise, gave him the *Humayoon Shah*. The retiring captain suffered no loss, while Buckingham had been wandering back and forth between Egypt and India, facing tempests, pirates, brigands, starvation, disease, heat, and cold, he had made three voyages to China and profited to the amount of thirty thousand pounds.

The commerce of the Indian Ocean attracted to its service those mariners who were willing to risk daily the most desperate hazards of the sea and who cared little what cargoes they shipped and less still for the crews as long as profits were quick and enormous.

²⁸ J. L. Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia* (London, 1829), 20.

²⁹ *India Office Records, Home Miscellaneous Series*, 532, document no. 2.

There were no European traders as such, because the East India Company excluded them, if not by law at least by practice, but European navigators commanded the ships owned by native magnates And Americans from beyond the Pacific came to compete both with the natives and with the Europeans in every mart of the Orient, Buckingham encountered them in Bussorah at the very head of the Persian Gulf

Buckingham's return to the sea as a commander of a native-owned vessel sent him to the Persian Gulf for a cargo of horses, destined for the India service in Bengal ³⁰ When the *Humayoon Shah* sailed, early in June, 1817, the prevailing winds made a direct passage to Arabia impossible, and the vessel pointed southward by the indirect course across the Indian Ocean, up the coast of Africa, and around Arabia into the Gulf Heat, sharks, and storms made the voyage exciting, unpleasant, and slow, six weeks passed before the ship anchored off Muscat and saluted the Imaun with a broadside of eleven guns The captain went ashore to pay his respects to the Imaun

The *Humayoon Shah* was six months in pulling up to Bussorah, loading the horses, some old copper, and dried fruit, and in returning to Muscat The voyage to Calcutta, which was interrupted by stops at Bombay, Calicut, Penang, Colombo, and Madras, was just as long, it was not until June, 1818, that Buckingham nosed his ship between the mud-banks of the Hoogli and anchored in Diamond Harbour off Calcutta The last argosy of the Cornish seaman was not a romantic quest for a golden fleece, but just a nasty voyage with a motley crew of Arabs, Hindus, Persians, Lascars, and negroes to handle excitable Arabian horses.

A vessel equipped for such a cargo could be quickly converted into one suitable for the transport of human freight, and in Calcutta Buckingham was ordered to Zanzibar on a slaving voyage Because of his hostility to slavery as an institution, he gave up his command ³¹

³⁰ *The Oriental Herald*, XVIII (1828), 407 *et seq.*, J S Buckingham, "A Voyage from Bombay to the Persian Gulf, by way of the Southern Passage", XXII (1829), 79 *et seq.*, J S Buckingham, "A Voyage from Bushire to Muscat in the Persian Gulf, and from thence to Bombay "

³¹ *Report from the Select Committee appointed to take into consideration the circumstances connected with the suppression of The Calcutta Journal, in 1823, and the loss of Property entailed on Mr Buckingham in consequence of that measure, and whether any and what amount of compensation ought to be awarded to Mr Buckingham for his losses, sustained, 1834*, 50

CHAPTER III

THE COCK OF ST ANDREWS

I. A NEW DEAL FOR INDIA

IN 1813 the Humanitarians, led by Wilberforce, who made a three-and-a-half-hour speech in favour of the proposal, forced into the East India Company's Charter Renewal Act a clause asserting England's duty both to promote the introduction of useful knowledge into India and to bring about the moral and religious improvement of its people. As a recompense, therefore, for the nabobs spawned in Indian plunder, an Anglican Bishop, at a salary of five thousand pounds a year and six hundred pounds additional in rents, was appointed to the See of Calcutta. By coincidence (or, more in accordance with the tenets of Calvinistic theology, by providential guidance) the Board of Directors of the East India Company awoke the Scottish Kirk to India's need for spiritual nourishment of the Presbyterian variety. Thus two very reverend gentlemen were fellow passengers on the long and tedious voyage to Bengal. The Reverend Thomas Fanshaw Middleton became the first Lord Bishop of Calcutta, the Reverend Samuel James Bryce undertook, among other things, the duties of the first minister of the Kirk of St Andrews, and India quickly experienced large activities reasonably directed toward its cultural rehabilitation.

The Cathedral of St John awaited the coming of the Lord Bishop, but, in spite of the fact that more than half of the English community in Calcutta were Scottish, there was no edifice for Presbyterian worship. Therefore, immediately upon his arrival, the Reverend Samuel James Bryce applied to the Bishop for the use of the Cathedral on alternate Sundays, but the Anglican prelate refused with more than necessary brusqueness. Austere dignity characterized the demeanour of Middleton, and fractious ardour pervaded the behaviour of Bryce, but the two men were alike in their aggressive sectarianism. When Bryce preached his inaugural sermon in January, 1815, he gave to the discourse the presumptuous title, "A Sermon preached at the opening of the Church of Calcutta," and contrasted the policy of the Presbyterian Kirk with that of the Anglican Establishment, which he did not hesitate to describe as

being corrupted with popery Not content with preaching the sermon, he had it printed for general circulation

After such preliminaries the sectarian controversy moved rapidly from crisis to crisis

When the Scottish influence secured the sanction of the Board of Directors for a building programme which provided for the erection of Presbyterian churches at Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta, the Bishop did not hesitate to oppose the ambitious projects He greeted the announcement that the choirs would be furnished with organs with the observation that John Knox would turn over in his grave at the first sound of the music The immediate aim of his opposition was to prevent the erection of the Calcutta edifice on the proposed site, that of Lord Clive's courthouse at the most prominent corner of Calcutta's finest street When Bryce carried the day, the Lord Bishop was so piqued that he refused to attend the ceremony of laying the corner-stone All the functionaries of the English community were present, either as Scots or as Free Masons, but Middleton, who, in spite of a special invitation and the reservation of a chair in the tent to shelter the dignitaries of the occasion, haughtily declined to grace the triumph of his rival

The Lord Bishop, however, was not beaten by one defeat He protested to Lord Hastings, the Governor-General, against the plan to decorate St Andrews with a high steeple and spire, Bryce of course sought official approval for these structures In order to escape the dilemma Hastings referred the controversy to the Board of Directors in England, and that august body found it necessary to appeal for a decision to the Board of Control, which, acting in the name of the Crown, was the final administrative authority in the government of India After much deliberation this supreme body approved the erection of the steeple and the spire, fixed their combined height, and stipulated the sum to be spent on their construction But the Scots and Bryce, although elated by their victory, were not entirely satisfied with the decision which limited the height of the spire They raised a sum of eight thousand pounds by public subscription, had the steeple and the spire built twenty feet above the height fixed by the Board of Control, and surmounted the whole with a resplendently gilded cock Thus was authority flouted and ecclesiastical dignity insulted.

The cock, of course, aroused a new dispute The Reverend Thomas Fanshaw Middleton again appealed to the Governor-General, the

Reverend Samuel James Bryce again called upon the same authority, and Hastings, again enmeshed in the sectarian quarrel, ordered all the papers relating to the affair to be hurled at the heads of the Directors who had sent out the two reverend gentlemen. When the Board of Directors came to act upon this issue, it refused to order the removal of the rooster but compromised in favour of the Bishop by directing that in the regular five years' repairs, no money was to be spent regilding the offending effigy. The Scots countered this decision with another public subscription, and the cock, in never dimming brilliance, continued to look down upon the Bishop, the Cathedral, and the whole British Empire in the East.¹

2 THE FREEDOM OF THE INDIAN PRESS

Meanwhile Bryce had come into conflict with the local powers over materials which he had published in his *Asiatic Mirror*, a newspaper he had founded shortly after his arrival in Calcutta. During 1815 he was cited twice for violating the press rules, once for the publication of an account of the military route from Janickpore to Catmandhoo after the Censor had struck the article from the proof-sheets and another time for discussing the formation of a new regiment of native troops. That a man of his talents should meekly submit to such rebukes without striking back was not to be expected. He charged the Censor, John Adam, who was also the Chief Secretary in the Political Department to the Bengal Government, with an over-sensitive and excessively rigorous administration of the press regulations, he protested that Adam's administration was more severe than was warranted either by the law or by conditions in Calcutta.

In 1817, when the review of a book which was chiefly metaphysical in character was suppressed, the controversy became so acute that it raised the entire question of the censorship and the regulation of the press. Adam justified his action on the grounds that the review was sarcastic in tone and therefore "liable to promote angry dis-

¹ On these controversies see Eyre Chatterton, *A History of the Church of England in India since the early days of the East India Company* (London, 1924), 123, Charles Webb Le Bas, *The Life of the Right Reverend Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, D.D.* (2 vols., London, 1831), I, 128-131, James Hough, *The History of Christianity in India, from the commencement of the Christian Era* (5 vols., London, 1860), V, 101, and George Smith, *The Life of Alexander Duff* (2 vols., London, 1879), I, 234.

cussion in the newspapers" In reply to Bryce's complaint that he had "overstepped the powers of his office," he declared that it was strictly within his duties to prevent newspaper quarrels, at the same time he intimated that the editor's threat to appeal to the Governor-General against his authority alone had determined him to strike out the review. This reply was only the beginning of another disagreement: what materials were to be inserted in the blank columns? Bryce proposed to publish an apology to his readers for the hiatus, together with some animadversions on the censorship, but Adam deleted the remarks on the censorship and ordered that ordinary news items should replace the proposed apology. Angered by this order, Bryce made good his threat to appeal to Hastings. The Governor-General answered him with a sharp reprimand, informing him that Adam had not overstepped his authority and that he, Bryce, was under the disfavour of the Government. To make the rebuke more pointed, Hastings observed that he was not unaware of the "incompatibility of the avocations of an editor and managing proprietor of a newspaper, with the clerical character, 'even supposing the newspaper conducted without inviting controversy,'"²

One might have expected that such an authoritative rebuff would have abashed the reverend proprietor of *The Asiatic Mirror*, but it does not appear that he suffered any particular embarrassment. He continued his obstreperous tactics by repeating the charge that the Censor had departed from the customary practices of his office. He was impudent enough even to request the permission to insert certain items, such as accounts of marriages, notices of deaths, and the latest news reports after the return of the proof-sheets from Adam's inspection. Adam refused the request, pointing out that the editor was guilty of doing these things without having referred them to the Censor at all. But this did not silence Bryce. He at once demanded that the Government either clarify the press regulations or abolish them entirely and, if the rules were simplified, that the Censor follow them in exercising the duties of his office. With evident indulgence the Government sent him a copy of the regulations of 1813 and promised that Adam would abide by them.³

Prior to 1791 the Indian press was subject to no other regulation than the English Libel law, but in that year, and for reasons similar

² *Report from the Select Committee 1834*, appendix, 113 *et seq.*

³ *India Office Records, Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 537, 459.

to those which brought the suppression of the democratic agitation in England, Wellesley, the Governor-General of Bengal, placed the newspapers under a strict supervision. He also transmitted a certain William Duane for having printed disrespectful and inflammatory articles, and the Supreme Court of Judicature upheld the order, thereby setting the precedent for expulsion as the punishment for crimes in the press.⁴ Between 1791 and 1798 two editors were reprimanded for discussing military events, and a captain was ordered home for writing an inflammatory address to the army, as a further punishment the Board of Directors reduced him to half-pay. In 1798 Charles McLean was transmitted because he refused to apologize for having written a caustic comment upon the conduct of a judge, who had interfered in a private fist fight growing out of a conspiracy to drive a member from a partnership which operated an indigo works. The judge was a party to the conspiracy. This was the first expulsion for the offence of having criticized a member of the Company's civil establishment. A year later an editor was transmitted for having published an "indecent criticism" of a postal clerk.

In 1799, when *The Calcutta Mirror* carried an article by a "desperate jacobin," contrasting the state of the natives with that of the Europeans, Wellesley formulated strict rules for the regulation of the newspapers and appointed a Censor to watch over them. Every editor was compelled to affix his name to the bottom of his paper and to deliver his name and address to the Government. The Governor-General also ordered that no papers were to be published on Sunday. For violation of the rules or an order of the Censor the punishment was to be transmission.⁵ Between 1799 and 1813 the exigencies of military circumstances brought several minor changes in the original rules, but the newspapers failed to obey them in every detail. In 1813, after *The Calcutta Daily Advertiser* had published an advertisement ridiculing an army officer, the rules were revised to cover all notices, handbills, extras, supplements, and books, as well as newspapers, and the Censor was authorized to suppress any articles or comments which he thought improper. It was a copy of these rules which was sent to Bryce.

With the administration of the censorship under a man who was more than ardent in his belief in the necessity for a policy of sup-

⁴ *Report from the Select Committee* 1834, appendix, iii.

⁵ R. R. Pearce, *Memoirs of the most noble Richard Marquess of Wellesley* (2nd ed., 3 vols., London, 1847), I, 282.

pression, it is not necessary to accept the view that Bryce was alone responsible for the disputes between himself and the Government. John Adam was the outspoken leader of that opinion in Bengal which asserted, as did Tories, Legitimists, and Reactionaries everywhere, that the press should be strictly controlled. Like Bryce he was a Scotsman, the son of a Lord High Commissioner of Scotland. He had come out to India at the age of sixteen and by energy, ability, and loyalty had risen steadily rank by rank to the top of the official hierarchy. Wellesley had placed him at the head of the Confidential Department of the Government, Lord Minto promoted him to the Chief Secretaryship in the Military Department, and from 1812 to 1819, when he was elevated to the Supreme Council, he served as Chief Secretary in the Political Department, charged among other duties with administering the press rules and acting as Censor. This career had shaped him into a typical bureaucrat, whose conception of political and social order was limited to the regular operation of official routine. Able, conscientious, and conservative, he was the staunch leader of the old oligarchy of Calcutta.⁶

Like Adam the members of the official hierarchy, especially in the higher positions, had come out to India in the late decades of the eighteenth century when the Tory influence in England was supreme, and, as in his case, experience had served only to confirm their original political convictions. This oligarchy constituted a privileged faction which, because it opposed every measure of reform that touched its position, was given the popular designation "the old Tories." On account of the green colour which predominated in their official garb, they were also known as "the gangrene," and popular speech described their chief activity as "behaundering," that is, "lording it over" their English inferiors and Hindus. For them a free press was the greatest evil that could befall India. They experienced "all sorts of hypochondriacal day fears and nightmares in which visions of the press and the Bible were ever-making their flesh creep and hair stand on end." They condemned the press because it pierced the veil which they threw over their public conduct, and they feared it as the agent for the diffusion of knowledge. They looked upon the Bible as an instigator of religious excitement and disorder among the natives. The British Empire in India was

⁶ Charles Lushington, *A Short Notice of the Official Career and Private Character of the Late John Adam, Esquire* (Calcutta, 1825), *passim*, *The Asiatic Journal*, XX (1825), 485*, "The Honourable John Adam."

supported by twin pillars, the ignorance of the native masses and the security of official acts from any public criticism. Accustomed to the slumbering ennui of silence they could not understand how governmental activity could be carried on amidst the clash and clatter of freely expressed opinions, they stood in awe of a free press "In my opinion," an observer remarked, "an old Indian should never be entrusted with the reins of government the tone of his mind is too absolute to hold them with moderation" The Indian milieu of authority, submission, luxury, and flattery had hardened them against what the world called "liberty"⁷

Adam argued that the "anomalous structure" of English power in India justified "the old Tory" conviction which insisted that power could be maintained only by preserving an "habitual deference for its authority and judgment"⁸ Certainly "the old Tories" were under no illusions as to the nature of the English position in India, they accepted as the fundamental article of their creed the proposition, about which such leaders as Hastings, Munro, Malcolm, and Metcalfe were dogmatic, namely, that English rule rested upon military force. Although *The Asiatic Journal*, the organ of the East India Company, declared that English power was due entirely to English intellectual superiority, others asserted that the Indian Empire was one of opinion only, that is, the opinion of English power held by the natives. The unrelenting hostility of "the old Tories" to a free press was founded in the fear that a public discussion of the acts and policies of the Government would disrupt this opinion by showing divisions of counsel to the natives. The natives lacked the "John Bullism of heart" which could enable them, in the words of *The Asiatic Journal*, "to draw the line between the honest and open expression of opinion, and the badly disguised treason that lurks under the sulky remonstrance." English rule in India was a despotism, and despotism was to be made secure only by more despotism

⁷ On "the Old Tories" see J. W. Kaye, *The Life and Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe, Late Governor-General of India* (2 vols., London, 1854), II, 249, *The Asiatic Journal*, loc. cit., 489*, *The New Monthly Magazine*, XI (1824), 447, William Huggins, *Sketches in India, treating on Subjects connected with the Government, Civil and Military Establishments, Character of the Europeans, and the Customs of the Native Inhabitants* (London, 1824), 65, and Major Henry Bevan, *Thirty Years in India, 1808 to 1838* (2 vols., London, 1839), II, 247.

⁸ John Adam, *A Statement of Facts, relative to the Removal from India of Mr. Buckingham, late Editor of The Calcutta Journal*, 52.

that was the faith of "the old Tory," and he had the courage of his convictions At least it was true with Adam

Perhaps Canning was correct in his opinion that the society of India "had no resemblance in the whole world," but one finds it easier to agree with Buckingham, who declared that, if India had never been governed by the East India Company and it had been proposed for the first time that the government of that country be turned over to such a conglomerate, the proposal would have been deemed "an insult to the meanest intelligence in the realm "⁹ Fundamentally Indian society consisted, as Buckingham said, of the native Hindu element over which had been superimposed Mohammedan and English layers There were the castes, but these, he argued, differed little from the European or English classes, except that the members of the higher Indian castes held their positions by performing definite social functions, whereas the English aristocracy was essentially parasitic in character. This was undoubtedly a prejudiced view The general structure of Indian society was, however, simply that of an order in which the foreign conqueror lived among, ruled over, and exploited the submissive natives, while at the same time he protected his monopoly both against alien rivals and against those unfortunates of his own nationality who did not share in the commercial or political organization of the monopoly In the Presidency of Ft William at Calcutta, Adam estimated that there was only one British subject for every fifty thousand natives, and beyond Calcutta the proportion of natives was twice as great As a matter of public policy the conquerors did not admit any amalgamation with the natives, but the large and growing body of Anglo-Indians in Calcutta belied the public protestation Certainly without continual reinforcements from the homeland, the ruling invaders would have been quickly absorbed into the native masses

Among the conquerors there was an unusual social gradation Adam described three general levels The military and civil officers of the King and the Company constituted the upper order, immediately below them were the persons living in India under the Company's licence and chiefly engaged in mercantile pursuits, the lowest grade was made up of persons with indifferent occupations who resided in India either with or without the Company's licence In the upper level the civil service was as tightly bound by ranks and precedents as was the army For the first five years of their service the members

⁹ *The Parliamentary Review*, III (1833), 197.

of the civil administration were known as "writers", for the next three years they were designated "factors", after the ninth year they became "junior merchants", and after the twelfth they were "senior merchants," taking rank according to the length of their service in the country In 1821 there were 332 "senior merchants" in Calcutta From their members came "the old Tories," who shared with the native nabobs the attitudes of despotism, irresponsibility, and inflated self-importance The true merchants formed the second social grade, but their wealth, having been greatly increased by interest on war-time loans at rates from fifty per cent upward, opened to them the doors of the official class Adam estimated that there were about three hundred of these merchant-financiers in Calcutta Although he admitted that these men were fitted to exercise the right of the English public to discuss political affairs, he considered their number too small to warrant the exercise of the right Their leader, John Palmer, head of a banking house and "prince of merchants," was a true liberal, who believed that he and his mercantile associates should enjoy the right which Adam and "the old Tories" denied them The common English residents were little more than hangers on, the rabble that followed a conquering army The city swarmed with petitioners and adventurers of every type— auctioneers, speculators, musicians, actors, barbers, undertakers, and advertisers or "puffers," who had come out to make their fortunes from the crumbs spilt by the monopolists After a five years' residence Buckingham thought that there were four thousand or more of these fortune-hunters in Calcutta, and he considered them as much entitled to the rights of the English public as either the official or the merchant classes¹⁰

The form of the Indian Government was far more peculiar than this social structure The spectacle of a corporation ruling an empire was not an unusual sight, for such has been the general practice of modern imperialism, but the organization of the East India Company's authority and the supervising institutions set up by the English Government formed a picture actually fantastic The immediate administration of English power was in the hands of a civil

¹⁰ John Adam, *op. cit.*, 53 *et seq.*, William Huggins, *op. cit.*, 72 *et seq.*, *The Calcutta Directory for 1821*, 14, *The Asiatic Journal*, new series, XX (1836), 149, J. J. Higginbotham, *Men Whom India Has Known* (Madras, 1824), 343, *Report from the Select Committee* 1834, 61, *The Calcutta Journal*, V (1822), 176.

service recruited as the patronage of the Directors of the East India Company. At the head of this service was the Governor-General, a political appointee of the English Government but subject, nevertheless, to recall by the Board of Directors of the Company. A Supreme Council composed of the three ranking "senior merchants," over whose advice he possessed an absolute veto, aided him in governing the Company's dominion. Only one limitation circumscribed his authority: no legislative act had the force of law until it was registered by the Supreme Court of Judicature, a tribunal whose members were selected by the Crown. As Commander-in-Chief of the Army, the Governor-General possessed that final authority which made him "an autocrat such as Orientals could understand and respect"; indeed, his was a "fearful prerogative."

In England four bodies shared the supervision of this Government, which was so far away that the exchange of communication between the home authorities and the actual rulers required almost a year. The Board of Directors of the East India Company exercised a direct supervision over the Indian establishment, but no decision of the Board of Directors was ever sent out to India unless it was dispatched by the "Commissioners for the Affairs of India," a body popularly known as the "Board of Control," which was appointed by the Crown and whose work was done by the man who was chosen its president. Between the Board of Directors of the Company and the Board of Control stood a Secret Committee, elected by the Board of Directors but in no way bound to inform that body of its decisions. Behind the Board of Directors was the shadowy power of the General Court of Proprietors of the Company, while supporting the Board of Control was the very real sovereignty of Parliament. From time to time the Court of Proprietors considered measures upon which the Directors disagreed, on the other hand, regularly at twenty-year intervals, when the Company's charter came up for renewal, Parliament reviewed the conduct of these other authorities. And on any occasion, if the interest of the nation seemed to warrant intervention, the legislature might assume control of the direction of Indian affairs.

In 1811, when a resolution calling for the production of all papers bearing on the regulation of the press in India was introduced, the problem of controlling the Indian newspapers was debated in the Commons. The resolution was easily defeated, but the debate showed

clearly the temper of the English leaders with respect to the freedom of the press in their far-off dominion. If "the old Tories" in Calcutta had "day fears and nightmares," their counterparts in England were hysterical with a horror inspired by contemplating the ruin, disaster, and terror which such a press might spread. One member raised the spectre of Santo Domingo, another declared that a free press might as safely be introduced into Tunis and Algeria as into India, and a third pictured the extermination of the entire English population, massacred by the natives in revolt. Dundas argued, "Could anything be considered more perilous than to spread opinions of all kinds whatsoever throughout the whole of Hindostan?" Like "the old Tories," the English supporters of a rigorous press-policy in India admitted the despotic character of the English rule, but they agreed, as Charles Grant asserted, that since despotism had existed in India for ages, England was not responsible for its presence there. The inference drawn from this argument was that England was in no way obligated to remove despotism, especially since the evil thing was helpful to her own rule.¹¹

When Buckingham landed at Calcutta the India which England thus ruled had hardly been touched by those liberal movements that had been struggling for realization in Europe since the French Revolution. Some seven hundred native princes maintained luxurious courts and irresponsible governments, upon which no checks existed but the endurance of their subjects. The English overlords aped as best they could both the softening life of luxury led by these native potentates and their political irresponsibility. No Englishman maintained a female bodyguard on the model of the Nizam of Hyderabad, but all surrounded themselves with servants of every kind. During the services at St Andrews a native stood behind each pew cooling the devout Presbyterians with a fan. And native women were hired to suckle English infants. In newly conquered provinces taxes were collected by means of torture; everywhere prisoners, convicted and untried alike, were huddled together in stifling jails and often kept in chains for months at a time, the burning of widows was performed under warrants of English magistrates, and revenues from the orgies of the Juggernaut found their way into dividends declared to pious Englishmen and conscience-stuffed Scotsmen. No matter how well educated, a Hindu or an Anglo-Indian could not sit on a jury or hold any important political office. The native language

¹¹ *Parliamentary Debates*, XIX (1811), 462-476.

had no word for "civil liberty," and the overlords were not at all anxious for the invention of one¹²

The socio-political system in India during the early decades of the nineteenth century was a fusion of Oriental despotism and the European *ancien régime*, administered not in the spirit of either but in the plundering and monopolistic spirit of early modern capitalism. The Hindus, stupefied by religious conservatism, abhorred change, and the English, satisfied in the profits of their monopoly, desired none

But with the close of the Maratha Wars in 1819 India settled into a brief period of comparative peace, remarkable for constructive acts and liberal policies. The leading figure in the work was the Marquess of Hastings, like Bryce and Adam a Scot, who, in spite of a bluff and military bearing, was liberal in his views of government and social policy. Two principles guided his peace-time administration. On the one hand he believed that the levies on the people should be spent for their benefit, and on the other he thought that the natives, if treated properly, would be found as trustworthy as the English. In "the black town," as the native quarter was called, the streets were drained and straightened, and the common nuisances which polluted the air were removed. Ghauts or great stairways were laid along the bank of the Hooghly in which the natives bathed as a religious duty. In the interior the Delhi and the Doab canals were reopened, and a commercial highway leading into Calcutta was built. But these public works were much less important to the future of India than his governmental policy. He reorganized the police system of Bengal and extended the power of the native judges. As a check upon oppression he adopted the Asiatic practice of receiving, while on his walks and rides, the petition of the meanest supplicant. The respectful treatment of the common natives and the courtesy which featured his diplomatic relations with the native princes softened the line of conflict between the conquered and the conquering. But more startling to "the old Tories," who looked upon these measures as almost revolutionary, was the appointment of natives to posts in the civil service and the appropriation of his own money for the support of schools so that the natives could secure the training necessary for such employment. Hastings believed that to perpetuate

¹² Henry H. Spry, *Modern India* (2 vols., London, 1877), II, 5, 8, 15, F. Dawtrey Drewitt, *Bombay in the Days of George IV* (London, 1907), 3 *et seq.*

the ignorance of the Indian people was "treason against British sentiment"¹⁸

More important, however, than these liberal acts was the atmosphere which they created, for under its stimulating effect began those movements which in the course of the nineteenth century were to create "new India." If the four years of peaceful administration by Lord Hastings were at the beginning of the generation which, as it has been said, gave India more progress than any other generation of the nineteenth century, the lines of that progress were directed by the social, political, and religious agitations which had their origins under the aegis of Hastings's liberalism. And the steel and brass of that shielding liberalism was his attitude toward the press, both native and English. He had "exalted notions of the benefits of free expressions of the sentiments of the public," and these notions led him to reverse Wellesley's policy. When the first newspaper in Bengalee, *Sumachar Durpun*, established by the missionaries at Serampore, appeared in May, 1818, he wrote a letter with his own hand expressing approval of the enterprise. In August of the same year he abolished the censorship of the English newspapers. The end of the native wars, the Bryce controversies over the irregularities of the Censor's office, and the refusal of certain native editors to obey the Censor, when it was found that they could not be deported, all played a part in bringing the Governor-General to adopt a policy more in accord with his own liberal attitude.

Out of deference to "the despotic feelings which pervaded the governing classes of Calcutta," Hastings did not go so far as to grant complete freedom to the press, he substituted for the censorship a set of rules which prohibited the publication of various kinds of news and comments.

First Animadversions on the measures and proceedings of the Honourable Court of Directors or other public authorities in England connected with the Government of India, or disquisitions on Political transactions of the local administration, or offensive remarks levelled

¹⁸ On Hastings's peaceful work in India see Major Ross of Blandenburg, *The Marquess of Hastings* (Oxford, 1893), 209, Henry T. Prinsep, *History of the Political and Military Transactions during the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings* (2 vols., London, 1925), II, 241, Henry H. Spry, *op. cit.*, 273, John C. Marshman, *The History of India from the earliest period to the close of Lord Dalhousie's Administration* (3 vols., Calcutta, 1867), II, 357, and Ramesa-chandra Datta, *England and India* (London, 1897), 28, 42.

at the public conduct of the Members of the Council, of the Judges of the Supreme Court, or of the Lord Bishop of Calcutta

Second Discussions having a tendency to create alarm or suspicion among the Native population, of any intended interference with their religious opinions or observances

Third The republication, from English or other Newspapers, of passages coming under above heads, or otherwise calculated to affect the British power or reputation in India

Fourth Private scandal and personal remarks on individuals, tending to excite dissension in society¹⁴

On their face the rules seemed strict and severe, but behind them, as clearly indicated in the letter which accompanied the circular to the editors, was the good will of the Governor-General

Relying on the prudence and discretion of the Editors for their careful observance of these Rules, the Governor General in Council is pleased to dispense with their submitting their papers to an Officer of Government previous to publication The Editors will however be held personally accountable for whatever they may publish in contravention to the rules now committed, or which may be otherwise at variance with the general principles of British Law as established in this Country, and will be proceeded against in such manner as the Governor General in Council may deem applicable to the nature of the offence, for any deviation from them

The Editors are further required to lodge in the Chief Secretary's Office one Copy of every Newspaper, periodical, or Extra, published by them respectively

J ADAM,

Chief Secretary to the Government¹⁵

19th Augt., 1818

Even more important than the Governor-General's indication of good will toward the press was his failure to give the new regulations the force of law. The rules were not presented to the Supreme Court for registration The liberal Hastings offered freedom to the editors, but the Tory Adam, who never agreed to the abolition of the censorship, stood ready to supervise their enjoyment of that liberty The question was what would happen to an unprudent or indiscreet editor? Could or would Hastings and Adam agree on that?

The abolition of the censorship was hailed, not only in Bengal but throughout India, with exultation At Madras, where the local censor had been most perverse, the enthusiasm culminated in the prepara-

¹⁴ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 537, 550

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 551, John Adam, *op. cit.*, 3

tion of an address of praise for Hastings The leading merchants, lawyers, and officials, among whom was the Advocate-General of the Presidency, composed the panegyric and selected a delegation to present it to the man who, as one of the delegates declared, had given "so great a boon to India as a free and unfettered press"

The coming of this delegation to Calcutta in June, 1819, stirred the English community, and the presentation of the address was made a state occasion The great pillars of the Audience Hall shone with the polish of chunam, and the grey marble pavement resounded with the footsteps of a gathering multitude All Calcutta came—the élite and the common, Adam and Bryce and Buckingham—to the number of two thousand or more State servants, holding bright silver staffs, stood in serried ranks behind the state chair, whose gilded frame and crimson velvet cushions were resplendent against the sparkling white of the tall columns And over the occupant of the state chair two servants waved punkahs of crimson silk, soft like the petals of poppies The gentle fanning broke somewhat the heat of the Indian summer According to the custom of such ceremonies the address was read and laid at the feet of the recipient

Hastings was greatly pleased with the address and in reply to its praises declared his faith in the freedom of the press both as the right of men and as the instrument necessary for good government They were portentous words

My removal of restrictions from the Press has been mentioned in laudatory language I might easily have adopted that procedure without any length of cautious considerations, from my habit of regarding the freedom of publication as a natural right of my fellow subjects, to be narrowed only by special and urgent cause assigned The seeing no direct necessity for these invidious shackles might have sufficed to make me break them I know myself, however, to have been guided in the step by a positive and well weighed policy If our motives of actions are worthy, it must be wise to render them intelligible throughout an Empire, our hold on which is opinion

Further, it is salutary for Supreme Authority, even when its intentions are most pure, to look to the control of Public Scrutiny While conscious of rectitude, that authority can lose none of its strength by its exposure to general comment On the contrary, it acquires incalculable addition of force That Government which has nothing to disguise, wields the most powerful instrument that can appertain to Sovereign Rule It carries with it the united reliance and effort of the whole mass of the governed—and let the triumph of our beloved

Country, in its awful contest with Tyrant-ridden France, speak the value of a spirit to be found only in men accustomed to indulge and express their honest sentiments¹⁶

What John Adam thought of this pronouncement was not recorded, but what the editors of Calcutta took it to mean was soon divulged

Meanwhile, since the abolition of the censorship, other events came to pass. The Honourable Court of Directors contemplated sending out a dispatch ordering the restoration of the censorship, and in the near future the Directors were to frame the command, only to have it shelved by the Board of Control. As might have been expected, the Reverend Samuel James Bryce found a new controversy, he quarrelled with the leading merchants of the city, who, over the signature of John Palmer, took the means of a public advertisement—a full page in *The Calcutta Government Gazette*—to declare that certain assertions made by the estimable divine were without foundation in fact. And a certain insignificant “free mariner” became the editor of a new journal in Calcutta

3 “THE CALCUTTA JOURNAL”

The transformation of the “free mariner” into an editor was the immediate result of his refusal to command the *Humayoon Shah* on the slaving voyage to Zanzibar. His display of humanitarian sentiment won the approval of Calcutta, including such public figures as the Governor-General, the Lord Bishop, and the prince of merchants, and their original good impression was enhanced by the perusal of the journal in which were recorded the incidents and observations of his travels in Palestine. The manuscript also called attention to his literary abilities. Thus advertised to the public, he was approached by John Palmer, who believed that the free discussion of political affairs was desirable and proposed to the unemployed captain the establishment of a paper that would be the organ of the merchants of the city. At first Buckingham, doubting his abilities, declined to consider the proposal, but after a while he decided to accept. As he said later in explaining his decision, “Perceiving it was rather independence than ability that was

¹⁶ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 538, 5, see also *Parliamentary Papers*, IX (1831-32), 113, and Sir John Malcolm, *The Political History of India from 1784 to 1823* (2 vols., London, 1826), II, 302

wanted, and believing myself to possess a fair amount of this, I ventured to undertake the task "¹⁷ Preliminary to the establishment of the new journal, he tried his hand on a couple of existing papers, but his probation was quickly over

On September 22, 1818, a single sheet appeared in the streets of Calcutta bearing the head, "Prospectus of a new Paper to be Entitled *The Calcutta Journal, or Political, Commercial, and Literary Gazette*"¹⁸ As was customary with the announcement of new ventures, the Government permitted the prospectus to circulate free of postage and except for securing this concession no negotiations were entered into with the Government in regard to the publication of the new journal On Friday, October 2, *The Calcutta Journal* made its débüt in an issue of eight quarto pages

Fulfilling the promise of the prospectus the first number contained an orderly presentation of a great variety of news The latest reports from England, Europe, and other countries both near and far, such as the Americas, South Africa, and the Levant, were summarized In addition to the usual items—marriages, births, deaths, the arrival and departure of ships, current prices, and governmental orders—the local chronicle included frank discussions of two matters of immediate public interest, a description of the inefficient state of the police and a complaint against persons in European dress whose outrages made Calcutta's streets unsafe at night To counterbalance these critical remarks the Government's liberality and energy in clearing Saugor Island as a place of refuge for the Europeans against the rigors of the Indian climate was given an enthusiastic approval Not the least interesting feature of the first number was the evident discretion displayed by the editor in refusing to print a criticism of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* as played at the Chowringhee Theatre Inasmuch as the actors were amateurs drawn from the élite of Calcutta society, this discretion was good policy The fourth Canto of Lord Byron's *Childe Harold* gave a literary tone to the number, which was completed by the announcement for future publication of a volume to be entitled *Travels in Palestine in 1816* by J S Buckingham Thus innocently enough began the career of the paper which *The Asiatic Journal* later described as "the first scion" in India of

¹⁷ Report from the Select Committee . 1834, 50, *The Heads of Mr Buckingham's Lectures on the Eastern World, preceded by a Sketch of his Travels and Writings* (London, 1829), 11

¹⁸ *The Calcutta Government Gazette*, September 24, 1818

"the radical stock" of England. The career was to run a hectic course for half a decade

The paper was an immediate success. Buckingham evinced an energy and a talent for editorship which more than made good the promises of the prospectus. Even now as one turns the yellow and worm-eaten pages of *The Calcutta Journal's* twenty-odd volumes, a gay and intelligent spirit greets one from the dulled print, and a little reading soon reveals why it was commended as "well-conducted," "independent," and "clever," and its editor described as "talented." It is not a surprise to learn that the paper "created in India a great taste for literature and the persecution of enlightened pursuits," but it can be called a discovery to find the editor praised for excelling in literary attainments such men among his English compatriots in Radicalism as Hone, Carlyle, and Leigh Hunt and to read that in spirit and principle he surpassed all these, even including Cobbett, who, however, won the palm for gross profanity.¹⁹

But such a talented editor could not satisfy all his readers. The most common complaint was laid against what some considered his over-emphasis of foreign news. As "A Quid Nunc of the East" implied by ironically sighing, "How I long to know whether or not the misfortune of Naples or the pain in the King of France's big-toe has ceased!" there was general desire for the details of local events. Perhaps conservative Calcutta did not care to read about the events then occurring in the world. Ypsilanti's proclamation, the revolution in Naples, Russia's threat of intervention, the amendments to the constitution of Massachusetts, and the happy ending of the revolution in Mexico, all found mention and comment in the *The Journal*. The editor's discussions of English politics, in which he took a lively interest, displayed, as Sir John Malcolm said, "an attachment to English principles," that is, Whig doctrines. From the homeland papers and periodicals he reprinted many articles, such as "An Essay on Revolution" from *The Morning Chronicle*, "Whom Does Parliament Represent" from *The Examiner*, "The Tyrannical Spirit of the Tories" from *The Scotsman*, and "The Opinions of Say, Malthus, and Sismondi on the Effects of Machinery" from *The Edinburgh Review*. Accounts of the parliamentary discussion of the Manchester out-

¹⁹ *The Asiatic Journal*, XVI (1823), 317 *et seq.*, F. Dawtrey Drewitt, *op. cit.*, 103, A. T. Ritchie and R. Evans, *Lord Amherst and the British Advance Eastward to Burmah* (Oxford, 1894), 23, Sir John Malcolm, *loc. cit.*, *Parliamentary Papers*, IX (1831-32), 113, evidence of Charles Lushington

rages and the Lords' report on free trade with India informed "the old Tories" about events which were not too pleasant for their contemplation

In addition to accounts of political events, topics of scientific and literary interest—a unique combination in an Indian paper—were generously included. Thus were Scott's *Ivanhoe*, Irving's *Sketchbook*, and Lord Byron's *Don Juan* introduced to the reading public of Bengal. The sailor-editor was particularly concerned with the development of the ways and means of communication. He discussed the North-west Passage, the Red Sea route, and steam navigation, relative to the shortening of the voyage between England and India, and startled his public by printing articles on machines for conveyance without horses and on the possibility of a voyage by air from Bombay to London in a gas-filled leather bag stretched over a cane frame and propelled by oars and bellows. And the range of his scientific interests was broad. He published plates showing the differences between living elephants and fossil mammoths and analyses comparing the facial lines of monkeys, negroes, American Indians, Europeans, Romans, and Greeks. The new editor was as advanced in his scientific interests as he was liberal in his political opinions.

Of those materials which nowadays make up the contents of a general newspaper or weekly periodical, one misses in *The Journal* only the attempts at humour. Occasionally there was a bit of satire, such for example as "An Old Maid's Thermometer," which showed the young lady coming out at fifteen, flirting with anyone at twenty-three, wondering how men can be interested in silly chits at thirty-three, admiring a Methodist parson at forty-five, and taking snuff in despondency at forty-seven. More to the editor's taste were sentimental verses, and occasionally he gave his own to the public.

If the editor brought to Calcutta the moving life of the world, he left to posterity, if it cares to look, many glimpses of that life which was the India of his day. Through the pages of *The Calcutta Journal* one can make out the daily round which was the even tenor, perhaps the monotonous routine, of existence both for the conquerors and for the conquered. And judging from the record neither nature nor man was kindly disposed.

One reads of weather intolerably hot, except in December, but at its worst in March when the dry winds blew. Heavy storms with rain and sharp lightning were frequent. In 1820 a bolt shattered the walls of the Lord Bishop's house. The country roundabout the city

was clothed in eternal verdure—in some places cultivated rice fields with pretty hedgerows and cane-built cottages, in others deep woodlands, and in still others, within a mile of the city, unclaimed jungle where tigers lurked and from which jackals stole into the city to howl even under the windows of the conquerors Gnats, flies, and bugs swarmed everywhere, and ants were particularly ferocious The white variety ate out the interior of wooden beams and supports, causing houses to collapse The black and red species were carnivorous, frequently attacking drunken sailors and soldiers Such evils were only the lesser afflictions more terrible still was the ever-present fear of famine and plague But nature was not entirely hostile, sometimes it was beautiful The sunsets were magnificent with colours that could be duplicated only in the spectrum Nature was majestic—and savage

And man, perhaps, was only pathetic

The natives seemed to stand immobile like the state servants in the Audience Hall But the immobility was the social rigidity of tradition and primordial custom The ryots were at work in their fields, their ploughs were drawn by ox-teams, and the men and beasts alike were on the edge of starvation Motley throngs filled the streets of "the black town", the natives were distinguished from the Arabs, the Chinese, and the East Indians by the flowing garments of white muslin Here also was colour beyond compare, for the burnished countenances and white robes were set off by turbans and girdles of scarlet, blue, violet, purple, and pink Only the palanquin bearers were bare-headed and naked, they ran silently from street to street The going and coming was endless, and the chattering never ceased On the street sat Gentoo-bearers gambling on chalked squares with wooden dice Nearby were coolies playing with palm-leaf cards And in the very shadows of the idols, the brahmans were to be seen intent upon similar games Perhaps a pariah sneaked by—clad in the skins of dead animals and kept alive by eating insects and carrion, ever on the move lest he be seen by a brahman The hovels were built of mud and brick, only the rich baboos could afford houses of more than one storey And all the buildings, except those kept in repair by the English, were more or less dilapidated, even the public bazaars. One could not avoid the strong odours, either of the peculiar Indian foods or of things far worse Dead bodies lay about the streets, and, if one walked by the river, one was sure to see corpses floating ^{by, occa-}

sionally with a vulture perched on a contorted joint The dying also could be seen in the streets, moaning out their last breaths in utter loneliness Sometimes against the horizon, far out in the country where the English residents were not permitted to go, there was to be seen the column of smoke ascending from a widow's pyre The city presented less horrible but more licentious rites, particularly at marriage celebrations Nevertheless, there was gaiety in the eyes of the people and laughter on their lips, in the streets were jugglers and dancers, at whose feats eager eyes gazed and wondered, and hardly a day passed that was not made merry with the mummery of a marriage procession

For the natives all this was life as they knew it life had never been any other way, and they hoped it would never change The English quickly accepted the native point of view by becoming indifferent to such conditions Even Buckingham was quick to sense and express the English indifference to the miseries of native life writing of the maltreatment of working cattle, he said, "A residence in India renders the mind as callous to this as to many other abuses that prevail" On another occasion he voiced the same sentiment by observing, "The uniform tenor of Indian life and manners is not often broken in upon by incidents either of singularity or other marked features of note"

The English, in fact, were too busy making life bearable for themselves to become excited over conditions which did not seem to arouse concern among the natives Disease and heat were the ever-present, never-relenting enemies of the invaders Newly arrived young men, young wives, and infants were particularly liable to untimely deaths. All funerals were required by law to be held on the day following the death Attendance at the Cathedral or at St Andrews for funerals and marriages was a normal feature of English social life

Chowringhee, the English quarter of Calcutta, was magnificently built with spacious houses and deep parks The course, as the road connecting the suburb with the city was called, ran along the bank of the Hoogli, and every afternoon after four o'clock the road was filled with vehicles of endless variety, carrying men, women, and children seeking a breath of cool air But often the dust was intolerable This evil was finally abated by sprinkling the roadway with water And other means of escaping the torturing heat were being introduced, in 1819 soda water and spruce beer mixed

into a cooling beverage made their appearance, and in the next year came the first proposal to furnish the city with ice. But in spite of the heat, absurd fashions, such as muffs and large bonnets for women and high military collars and tall boots for men, were kept up.

The effects of the climate upon English daily life were manifold. Both men and women were always either irascible or languid and were ever filled with a longing for home. Men found relief from such feelings in the eager quest for a quick fortune, but society, as a whole, resorted to a continuous round of entertainments—concerts, parties, dinners, balls, and sports. At all seasons of the year the lottery offered excitement in the thrill of the gambler's chance, and in the cooler months horse-racing with the accompanying betting, added show and display to the excitement of the sport. One was jostled in the throng at the races—

crowding all for elbow room
Are prentice boys and clerks and drunken tars,
Men, women, children, peasant, labourer, groom,
With sleek fat Consamauns and sleek Sarkars
Assembling in whole hosts from the bazaars—

and was caught up in the gaiety and colour of the carefree spirit which pervaded it

Bet on the sky-blue jacket—'tis so pretty

If the balls were less exciting than the races, they were, on the other hand, more pretentious and elaborate. In 1819 some six hundred guests attended Lady Buller's masque ball. Dressed as Titania and surrounded by elves, she greeted the Knight Templars, Cossacks, French peasants, Scotch damsels, Elizabethan ladies and gentlemen, and Pindarries as they entered the "Hall of Pleasures." Unfortunately a fire broke out in Titania's bower, but such catastrophes were frequent, and the dance went on unhindered except for a few moments' confusion while the blaze was being extinguished. The merriment was contagious.

To guide the dancers and airs to change
A Frenchman ready stands—not very far—
And squeaks out sentences uncouth and strange,
As *Dos a dos*—and *demre queu du chat*
Or *Balances vos dames*—et cetera

And the ladies were lovely

'T would please you to behold the fair ones spread
 Their gauzy petticoats with modest care,
 Or turn their graceful arms above their head,
 They are, I vow, the most engaging traps to wed

But there were other requirements for brides beside the ability to turn a pretty reel one young man, who advertised for a mate, stipulated that the prospective wife must be free from liver complaint And there were ways to spend evenings other than at a ball—such, for example, as rattling glasses, shaking drowsy-headed servants, and filling the streets with boisterous cries of "hip, hip, hurrah "

In a society so constituted and governed, the opportunities for an independent editor to find causes worthy of agitation were almost infinite in number, and considering Buckingham's adventurous temperament, he was mild rather than harsh in his editorial attacks He spoke most sharply and continuously against widow-burning, which he considered the most horrible rite in all the annals of human depravity, and openly criticized the Government for its policy of indifference To bring about that general renovation in Hindu life which might alleviate lesser abuses and raise the level of existence for the people as a whole, he placed his faith not in governmental action but in education He praised the efforts to establish native schools and newspapers When Ram Mohun Roy, the precursor of such contemporary figures as Tagore and Gandhi in promoting the cultural revival of India, founded *Sambad Kaumudi* (*The Moon of Intelligence*), the first paper in a native tongue designed for the common people, Buckingham supported the enterprise, in fact, he and Ram Mohun Roy were closely associated during this early period of native journalism and shared, no doubt, the hopes for the future which Buckingham expressed, "The pleasure with which we regard the effusions of the native press, does not arise from the intrinsic value of these productions, but as an earnest of what it may produce when it has attained maturity " Among England's future glories he predicted that the introduction of a free press into India would be the greatest, for, by this freedom and only by it, could be wrought the moral and intellectual reformation of the country ²⁰

²⁰ *The Calcutta Journal*, V (1819), 81, I (1820), 185, III (1820), 537, IV (1821), 507, II (1822), 583, Sophia Dobson Collett, *Life and Letters of Raja Ram Mohun Roy* (Calcutta, 1913), Introduction, lxxiii, 76, 94

As spokesman for the resident merchants, Buckingham had the easy task of criticizing the East India Company and its agent, the Bengal Government. He singled out those privileges by which the Company maintained its exclusive and monopolistic position in the East for direct attack and immediately declared for free trade. He argued that England would soon lose the commerce which she already possessed in the East unless the Company's monopoly was abolished. He advocated the opening of the vast continent of Asia to the unrestrained competition of capital and skill and opposed the policy which barred the English from owning lands in India.

The very existence of *The Journal* was bound up with the public discussion of those immediate acts and policies of the Bengal Government under which the merchants lived, and such discussions presumed the freedom of the press. In a quotation from Bacon, "A forward retention of custom is as turbulent a thing as innovation, and they that reverence old times are but a scorn to the new," the prospectus of his journal challenged "the old Tories" and all others who might oppose that principle. His conception of the function of the press in society was twofold, "to illuminate and to reform." He elaborated this conception in more detail "by giving intelligence from every quarter of the globe, they [the newspapers] excite inquiries, by displaying the good and bad qualities of other nations, they remove ill-founded prejudice, or confirm deserved aversion."

They diffuse taste, they correct prevailing absurdities, they awe the proudest into the conviction of keeping some terms with public opinion." In political terms these functions became "To admonish governors of their duties, to warn them fearlessly of their faults, and to tell disagreeable truths." Those who opposed the freedom of the press he condemned by repeating the traditional anathema, "Philosophy, Wisdom, and Liberty support each other—He who will not reason, is a bigot,—he who cannot, is a fool,—he who dares not, he is a slave."²¹

These were bold doctrines and the worst of heresies to "the old Tories," by whom the very utterance of such sentiments was considered a danger both to the Government and to the British power in the East. They argued, in the words of Adam, that, in a society constituted like that of India, the right to utter them was a "mockery."

²¹ *The Calcutta Journal*, III (1819), 864, IV (1819), 2, II (1820), 273, III (1820), 157, V (1820), 273.

But Buckingham found an extra and special justification for a free press in India, it served instead of a legislature as a check upon the Government India possessed no middle class and therefore, according to Adam, lacked that social element which made a free press safe, but Buckingham argued that this lack of a middle class made the newspapers the necessary instrument for pointing out prevailing abuses and criticizing pernicious policies In performing this needful work he declared that his paper neither spoke the voice of a deluded mob nor uttered the caprice of personal judgment, rather it voiced the sober opinions of those "persons of education, of principle, and of generous and enlightened minds," who composed the English community of Calcutta When he gave to his paper the subtitle, "The Paper of the Public," he boldly declared to the enemies of a free press that he meant to subject the Government to "the control of public scrutiny" after the manner suggested by Hastings in his reply to the Madras address²²

But the audacious editor did not assume the rôle of an unofficial dictator, on the contrary, except to defend the liberty of the press, he published little under editorial heads which might have been considered over-critical or improper His crime or his virtue, depending on one's point of view, was to open the columns of his paper to the public for a free discussion of whatever matters it might find interesting and important from time to time Any one who wished to comment on public affairs, point out an abuse, or lay bare a grievance found that a letter to *The Journal* was the most effective means of approaching the public mind Buckingham did not pretend to agree with his correspondents, he only published their opinions and defended his right to do so By May, 1819, the letters had become a steady flow, between that date and July, 1821, when the flood of missives was at its height—sometimes as many as fifty arriving in a day—he published over a thousand communications of one kind or another And his correspondents were insistent that he publish more As late as 1822 they were asking that he turn over some of the space given to European affairs to the discussion of local matters²³

No account of affairs in India during the early 1820's can ever be complete without giving some attention to the correspondence

²² *The Calcutta Journal*, III (1819), 383, IV (1820), 734

²³ *Ibid.*, III (1819), 990, IV (1821), 15, on the character of *The Calcutta Journal* see also *The Asiatic Journal*, XIV (1822), 136 *et seq.*, XVI (1823), 318.

of *The Calcutta Journal* In these letters the English public spoke its mind "Injuratus," "Veritas," "Rogator," and "Spectator" argued and rebutted, "Sam Sobersides" filled his cheek with tongue in ironical seriousness, "Humanitas," "Civis," and "A Reformer" exposed crying evils, and a hundred others bore the burden of their complaints to the editor either for his support or for his consolation Old evils were canvassed, new evils were discovered, and a general change was brought over the public mind The paper became, as *The Asiatic Journal* later declared, the discoverer of complaints hitherto unknown How different was the temper of the communications in the columns of *The Journal* from those which found their way into contemporary sheets, for example, in *The Calcutta Government Gazette* where the Registrar of the Marine Office complained against criticism in the public prints, where a Scotsman advocated the establishment of savings banks, and where "Old Philo" and "Quadrillnia" argued over the impropriety of waltzes and frilled pantaloons

In that quiet and heated atmosphere so beloved by "the old Tories," the winds of opinion were stirring, and "the old Tories" shivered at the faintest breath But there was nothing typhonic in these movements, they were more like the trade winds and the monsoons, which were universal and steady so that nothing escaped the pressure

Some correspondents railed against the stench at the bazaars, condemned the diseased animals in the zoo, advised on the extirpation of rats, or were provoked by the powers of Bengal mosquitoes More by far railed at the nuisances about the city—the ruggedness of the roads, old private docks in the river, the dust on the course, the crowding in the auction rooms, the favouritism at these public sales, the disrepair of Chowringhee Theatre, the absurdities of the prevailing fashions, and the general planlessness of the city as a whole A few were moved to exhort the public on the shocking conditions known to exist among the natives, such as infanticide, the slave trade, widow-burning, and the general disregard for the dead and dying so often to be seen in the city streets A small number delicately picked at such intellectual abuses as the absurdities of etymology and the sluggishness of the Asiatic Society, to which Buckingham had been elected early in his editorial career Others assailed the levity of clergy of the Church of England, decried the meanness of the Cathedral, and were shocked at the poor

attendance at Sunday service The bold and trenchant raised their voices against scandals in the administration The postal service was generally criticized Such notorious evils as partialities in delivering mail, extraordinary delays in forwarding letters, and, worst of all, inconsistencies in reckoning charges were condemned time after time The police were charged with inefficiency, and the courts were castigated for the delays and expense which made a resort to law of little satisfaction even to the successful litigant Occasionally complaints were registered against the Government's indifference to the grain monopoly and its failure to provide a store against the possibility of a famine Finally those correspondents who knew the fear of neither God nor the Government nor "the old Tories" attacked evils in the military establishment Idleness and intemperance, particularly among the junior officers, were censured, nepotism and patronage were denounced, the right of appeal from military law was advocated, and the unfairness by which the country-born English were deprived of certain military advantages monopolized by the immigrant British was condemned

Buckingham thought that a large part of the success of *The Journal* was due to this bold presentation of popular opinions Adam looked upon the agitation as the work of an inconsequential body of "self-called reformers," but not so inconsequential that they ought not to be suppressed ²⁴

When *The Calcutta Journal* appeared with its generally improved news-service and policy of free discussion of public affairs, there were eight other papers in Calcutta Of these *The Calcutta Gazette* and *Morning Post* were merged in the new journal, the others, especially *The Calcutta Government Gazette*, *The Indian Gazette*, *The Bengal Hurkaru*, and *The Asiatic Mirror*, received the new competitor with violent and turbulent opposition Buckingham had more or less invited such a reception by listing in his prospectus both the faults of the existing papers and his own qualifications as an editor He accused the existing sheets of lacking sentiments, of being "seven fold repetitions of each other," "of copying copiously from old English papers, and of filling their columns with masses of small illegible type" He was overtly careful to call attention to their barren treatment of Indian affairs He claimed, as his own qualifications, a special knowledge of certain matters of general importance to the Indian community, such as navigation and

²⁴ *The Calcutta Journal*, III (1822), 302, John Adam, *op. cit.*, 41

commerce, and considerable information on most subjects treated in public print.

Such claims invited counter-claims and worse, and shortly his correspondents were condoling him on account of the bitter reception given him by the rival editors "Amicus" observed, "You have been rather roughly handled by some of your brethren," while "A Friend" assured him that "the manner in which several Editors attack you, on your first appearance, is most impolitic and illiberal" As *The Journal* won a quick success, all the hatred of an "intruder" was turned against him Nor was the opposition above the level of abuse and slander "Polly-Gamy" wrote of having heard at a ball that one of Buckingham's four wives had just landed, and "Belinda Blue-stock" informed him that about all she had heard of his past was how barbarously he had treated "a small wife and a large family" His travels in Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia gave rise to rumours without end about his matrimonial adventures and moral character ²⁵

One among his traducers—no less a personage than the Reverend Samuel James Bryce, editor of *The Asiatic Mirror*—was most venomous Two weeks after the first issue of *The Journal*, Buckingham took occasion to answer charges against him which had already appeared in *The Mirror* The calumnies owed their origin to his innocent lapse from the stern severities of a Presbyterian Sunday While calling one Sunday afternoon on a lady of fashion in Chowringhee, he had walked through the form of a new quadrille with several young ladies There was no music, and the whole performance was merely to permit the lady to judge whether the dance should be introduced at her next masquerade ball But Bryce, quick to scent danger in the advent of a rival journal, found in the episode evidence of the immorality of the new editor, whom he charged with attending a "profane party" on the Lord's Day Bryce betrayed the motive of his tirade by describing Buckingham's presence as "an intrusion" and by commenting upon "the wonderful alacrity by which every schemer is received in this part of the world" Buckingham countered these remarks by calling the kettle black, he upbraided "the bewhiskered moralist" for publishing his *Asiatic Mirror* on the Lord's Day and remarked that his "intrusion" was evidently "so powerful" that the "drivelling divine" felt it.

²⁵ *The Calcutta Journal* I (1818) 131, 134, II (1822), 241, 283

The climax of the controversy was surpassing in puerility. Early in 1819 a composition under the title, "A Letter to the Editor of *The Calcutta Journal* occasioned by his notices of some late Transactions that have attracted public attention at this Presidency," signed "By an Englishman," and printed on *The Mirror* press, circulated about Calcutta. Its author gnawed a juicy bone of contention. He accused Buckingham of having attacked innocent people, of having connived in a seduction, of having found the King of England an accomplice in the encouragement of such a crime, and of having fawned upon the public men of India. The letter ended with the grand flourish, "You have become the Bully of Virtue," and the significant declaration, "The freedom of the press so lately granted to the Press in India by the present liberal and enlightened Governor-General, might well be again withdrawn, if such men as you are to wield this powerful weapon."

Who was the "Englishman"? And what was the basis of his sensational charges? Buckingham accused Bryce of having written the paper, which the reverend editor denied, admitting, however, that he had published it. By what far-fetched logic and malignant will to find fault the charges were concocted can readily be seen when their foundation is exposed. In England, according to a news report, a man had secured his release from an insane asylum to which he had been sent for having deserted his wife to live with a girl whom he had seduced. Buckingham, reprinting the item, not only deplored the man's escape from the just penalty of his crime but also declared that all persons who had connived at his release were unfit for society. In this instance Buckingham's views were hardly liberal, but certainly they were a slight basis for the accusation that he had slandered the King.

After this episode came cooler feelings. A correspondent advised Buckingham, "Nothing can be worse than sullying your columns with answering the virulent and silly invective of your rivals." *The Journal* apologized to the "Englishman" for having falsely identified him with the editor of *The Mirror*. And that estimable person, when shortly *The Asiatic Mirror* passed into the limbo of defunct newspapers, found more time to attend to his duties in St Andrews.²⁶

Controversy and the demise of *The Asiatic Mirror* were the out-

²⁶ *The Calcutta Journal*, I (1818), 73, II (1819), 103, 110, 131, *A Brief History of the Banishment of Mr Buckingham from India* (London, 1823), 2.

ward signs of Buckingham's prosperity. From the very first *The Journal* was a financial success, three months after the first issue, the borrowed capital of three thousand pounds was repaid, both the investment and the profits increased with each year. The paper began with two hundred and seven subscribers taken over from *The Calcutta Gazette* and *The Morning Post*, by 1819 this number had doubled, and in 1820 the paper was more widely circulated than any other in India. When it reached the height of prosperity in 1822, the subscribers numbered above one thousand, chiefly among the civil servants, military officers, and merchants of Calcutta and the neighbouring military posts. At the same time the subscription rate was reduced so that by 1820 the price per month was only a little more than half that of its rivals. One result of this prosperity was the thorough modernizing of the printing plant and office equipment. A new building was constructed, the first of the improved Columbian presses was imported from England, together with English, Greek, Hebraic, and Arabic founts, and a library was opened for the use of both the editorial staff and the subscribers. In 1822, when a financial reorganization of the paper was carried out, the estimated value of the enterprise was placed at forty thousand pounds, three-fourths of which amount was the property of the editor, the remainder of the property was owned by one hundred purchasers of hundred-pound shares. At that time the yearly profits ranged around thirty per cent on the investment, and Buckingham's yearly income was about eight thousand pounds. The adventurer was on the high road to fortune.²⁷

4 ASPERSIONS, QUIBBLES, AND QUARRELS

But in spite of the success of *The Journal* and the failure of the attempts to discredit its editor, bad repute gathered around his name. From Egypt came damning epithets—"rascal," "scoundrel," "brute," "rogue," "liar," and "fool." After Burckhardt met Buckingham for the last time at Cairo in 1815, he developed a violent dislike for the man upon whom on two earlier occasions he had bestowed a willing friendship, at Esneh in 1813 and at Jeddah a year

²⁷ *The Calcutta Journal*, I (1818), 481, I (1819), 76, III (1821), 719, I (1823), 125, *Report from the Select Committee* 1834, 9 *et seq.*, evidence of James Sutherland, 58

later, and he published this aversion in a paper which was circulated all over the Levant. The diatribe came to Buckingham's notice at Bombay, but there it fell upon deaf ears.

The causes of Burckhardt's sudden antipathies are obscure. At Jeddha, in 1814, when Buckingham was sick he had borrowed money from the Swiss. This money had not been repaid when they last met, and at that time there was no present or future prospect of its repayment. Burckhardt was also opposed to Buckingham's plan of going to India by the overland route through Syria and Mesopotamia. Buckingham felt that there was an element of jealousy in this opposition because the journey would take him through countries which the Swiss had not visited. In view of the bitterness which often came between personal rivals in those days, Buckingham's feeling probably was not entirely without reason.

But regardless of the causes of his spite, Burckhardt's accusations were rabid. He described Buckingham as "a cunning yet awkward swindler" and charged him with having defrauded many people, in particular Babbington, who had furnished the money for the return voyage from Bombay to Alexandria in 1815. And the extraordinary incidents in Buckingham's career provided an excellent foundation for the charge that he was a "liar" and "an impostor." But worse still was the insulting imputation that Buckingham had deserted his wife and family and was wasting his time and what little money he could sponge from acquaintances in "fashionable living." Of course such accusations, whether founded on fact or on fiction, were grist to the mill of the editor's Calcutta enemies, who cared little that he refuted the charges by publishing a letter from Babbington which cleared him of the crimes of swindling his friends and deserting his family.

Burckhardt had died in 1817, and his accusations, amplified in the controversial atmosphere of Calcutta, were made to sound like the cries of an avenging angel, calling eternal damnation down upon the interloper. But snarls of the living added volume to the wail of the dead, they sounded in one chorus of defamation.

When the first issue of *The Calcutta Journal* reached Egypt early in 1819 it fell under the eyes of Buckingham's companion in Palestine, William John Banks, Jr., and he saw red. The advertisement which announced to the world the prospective publication of *Travels in Palestine in 1816* by J. S. Buckingham stirred him to a rage which burned itself into a letter that he dispatched at once to

Buckingham He accused Buckingham of having stolen the materials for the proposed book and elaborated the charge with aspersions upon Buckingham's learning He was vehement in the demand that all materials touching upon the journey to Jerash and descriptions and drawings of its remains should be not only taken out of "the book but also returned to him He ended the epistle by declaring that he would make Buckingham's character as notorious in England and in India as it was already in Egypt

But Buckingham was not entirely defenceless It will be remembered that one of Bankes's letters could not be found when they were returned to the author at Aleppo, now in a purely accidental manner this lost letter was recovered A careful servant whom Buckingham had sent to sell his saddle bags found it stuck fast by the wax of its seal to the bottom of one of the leather pouches With this letter in his possession the accused editor did not hesitate not only to reply personally to Bankes but also to publish the letter so that all Calcutta could be convinced of the falsity of his detractor's charges Moreover, he took the precaution of having the recovered letter certified as genuine, nine prominent members of the Calcutta community, including D'Oyly, the Collector of the Customs, Chastenay, a Deputy Secretary of the Government, Wynch, Deputy Registrar of the Courts, Young, of the banking house of Alexander and Co, and John Palmer attested under oath to its authenticity

The letter cleared Buckingham of the charges of having been Bankes's hired servant, more pointedly it established the fact that Bankes had courted Buckingham's company and aid in his travels through Palestine If any one had been a parasite in Palestine, the letter indicated that that person was Bankes and not Buckingham It was apparent to any one who cared to know the truth that Bankes's anger had gotten the better of his good judgment in his attempt to degrade his former companion And Calcutta had *The Journal* to prove that Buckingham was not quite as ignorant as the Bankes's fulmination attempted to make out The publication of the letter silenced Buckingham's enemies for the time being, but they continued to hope that the accusations were true

Bankes, however, was more successful in the attempt to bring Buckingham's name into disgrace in England He proclaimed that *Travels in Palestine* was based on his notes and that the reputed

author was an impostor Buckingham had been encouraged to publish the work by several of the most prominent figures in Calcutta Mackenzie, Surveyor-General of India, and Dr Lumsden, Professor of Arabic at the Writers' College, had praised the manuscript highly, Lord Bishop Middleton had read the original draft with interest and enthusiasm, and Lord Hastings had consented to have the book dedicated to himself When the manuscript reached England late in 1818, John Murray, publisher of *The Quarterly Review*, contracted to bring it out He assumed the entire cost and promised to give the author six hundred copies to be sold in India Bankes and his father carried their accusations to Murray, who, after delaying his decision for a year, broke the agreement The manuscript was then transferred to Longman, who published the book in 1821²⁸

When the *Travels in Palestine* finally appeared it was received favourably by the reviewers *The Asiatic Journal* had already greeted its prospectus with a friendly comment on the author, "With the engaging frankness of a sailor, he disclaimed learning —to surprise us with erudition" *The Eclectic Review* found the volume "interesting and valuable in more than ordinary degree" *The Gentleman's Magazine* declared that it was "impossible to do justice to the work" On the whole we have seldom met with travels so highly deserving the patronage of the public" And in India *John Bull*, the bitter rival of *The Journal*, gave the work a complimentary review, and *The Bull*, as another Indian paper said, was "no contemptible critick" It remained for *The Quarterly Review* to scuttle the book and excoriate the author In an age notorious for bitter reviews and literary feuds, no more senseless tirade was ever loosed than that which the Tory quarterly published against Buckingham, whom the reviewer described as "an unlettered sailor who can hardly read" If Bankes did not write the review, he undoubtedly inspired it It denounced the author for blunders in spelling, for impiety, for deception, and for theft, and pleaded for the publication of Bankes's notes on the ruins of Jerash (They never appeared) The reviewer concluded his tur-

²⁸ For the details of Buckingham's relations with Bankes see *Travels in Palestine*, appendix, 642, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, II, appendix, 24 *et seq.*, *Verbatim Report of the Action for Libel in the case of Buckingham versus Bankes*, II, 26, *The Calcutta Journal*, VI (1822), 703, *The Oriental Herald*, VI (1824), 384

gid remarks with an ostentatious nose-thumbing "So much for Buckingham!"²⁹

Notwithstanding the editorial cat-calling which the rise of *The Calcutta Journal* occasioned, neither Buckingham nor any of his adversaries were reprimanded for violating the press rules, it was not until May, 1819, that the Bengal Government took any notice of the new editor. At that time Hugh Elliott, the Governor-General at Madras, called the attention of the Calcutta authorities to a comment in Buckingham's paper.

We have received a letter from Madras written on deep black-edged mourning post, of considerable breadth, and apparently made for the occasion, communicating, as a piece of melancholy and afflicting intelligence, the fact of Mr Elliott's being confirmed in the government of that presidency for three years longer!

It is regarded at Madras as a public calamity, and we fear it will be viewed in no other light throughout India, generally³⁰

Elliott demanded the punishment of the editor for having published such remarks, and, inasmuch as his regulation of the press was exceptionally severe, the demand was not unreasonable. Elliott compelled the newspapers to be submitted twice for censorship before they were published, edited out undesirable portions of parliamentary debates, and had actually suppressed *The Prayer Book* of the Christian Unitarians because it did not contain the doctrine of the Trinity.

Before the arrival of Elliott's complaint, the Bengal authorities had referred the squib to Spankie, the Advocate-General, who, although he characterized it as "a wanton attack upon the Madras Government," was unable to find it sufficient grounds for a prosecution under the libel law. He observed that there was "a good deal of art" in the way the paragraphs were written and suggested that the Government, instead of undertaking a prosecution whose outcome would be uncertain, send a warning to the editor.³¹ After receiving Elliott's communication Bayley, who had succeeded Adam

²⁹ *The Quarterly Review*, XXVI (1822), 374 *et seq.*, "Travels in Palestine, through the Countries of Bashan and Gilead, east of the River Jordan", *The Asiatic Journal*, VIII (1819), 274, *The Eclectic Review*, XVII (1822), 2, *The Gentleman's Magazine*, XCII (1821), part two, 437, *The Bengal Hurkaru*, XXXIV (1822), 397

³⁰ *The Calcutta Journal*, III (1819), 652, *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 538, 9 *et seq.*

³¹ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 532, 75

upon the latter's entering the Supreme Council, informed Buckingham that his conduct had been displeasing to the Governor-General and that another offence would forfeit him countenance by the Government. A copy of the press rules of 1818 was enclosed with the warning. Buckingham replied with a long letter. In addition to declaring his regret at "having caused His Lordship in Council to express his displeasure" and assuming that indulgence on this occasion would be "an additional incentive" to the future observance of the press regulations, he called attention to the violation by the other newspapers of the rule which forbade the publication of "personal slander," almost all of which was directed toward himself. He ended by emphasizing the general impression that the press was free.³²

This episode disclosed the policy both of the Government and of the editor. On the part of the former the policy was to reprimand but not to punish, with the latter it was to regret but not to comply.

During the summer of 1819 Calcutta was disturbed by a factional controversy over the conduct of the select vestry of the Anglican congregation of St. John. The select vestry had ejected the regularly elected administrators of the congregation's charities and had filled the vacancies with its own appointees. The select vestry was made up of the Governor-General, his council, the Lord Bishop, and the chaplains of the parish, all who believed that established authority was never to be criticized supported its action. But a large opposition protested that the ejection of the sidesmen was a violation of the rules of the parish as formulated in 1787 and, to voice its resentment, held a public meeting and in eighteen resolutions condemned the action of the established ecclesiastical authorities. *The Calcutta Government Gazette*, the official organ, insisted that no censure of the select vestry was to be allowed and refused to publish the advertisement calling the meeting.

Of course Buckingham had no interest in the dispute except to report its progress. At the time of this public meeting he asked each man who spoke to furnish a brief of his remarks for publication, when all responded but one—a young clerk by the name of Darwall, who had supported the select vestry—he wrote up the meeting, including the missing speech, which was compiled from private reports. Darwall resented the editor's enterprise and took

³² *Report from the Select Committee 1834, appendix, 5-8*

the occasion of their first meeting to show his anger. They met on the course. Darwall rode up on horseback, passed Buckingham, who was driving in a buggy, then wheeled and shouted, "Your name is Buckingham, I believe," and cut at the editor twice with his quirt. Buckingham returned the lashes with his buggy whip. When he invited Darwall to get off his horse and fight it out, the latter rode off.³³

Darwall's attack was a cowardly expression of the opposition which the independent editor had aroused among "the old Tories" and their sympathizers. They objected to his articles on the vestry question because he openly favoured the popular faction, when he published the parish rules of 1787, they accused him of being anti-Church. They complained most loudly against what they called his abuse of the freedom of the press.

But in spite of this growing hostility to his editorial conduct, Buckingham had no more trouble with the authorities until he published a letter from a Madras correspondent, who protested against the practice of paying the soldiers of that Presidency in the depreciated currency of the Nizam of Hyderabad. The officers, although they refused to accept the Nizam's issues, found it good business to exchange the Company's gold for the cheaper money and to pay the men with it. The author of the letter argued that this practice was demoralizing the army because it set the officers trafficking for illicit gains and embittered the rank and file. As in the case of "the black-edged letter," the Bengal authorities took no notice of the communication until a Madras official called it to their attention. In making the complaint Rupel, the resident at Hyderabad, observed, "It cannot have been intended, in removing the restrictions from the Press, either that the acts of the government should be audaciously arraigned or that their servants should be wantonly traduced."³⁴

When Bayley asked for the correspondent's name, it was supplied, and no reprimand fell upon the editor. On the contrary, the situation at Hyderabad was investigated and corrected, a result which provided Buckingham with an example of the utility of the free press. But Adam thought quite differently, for he saw in the Government's action only an encouragement to the editor in his policy.

³³ *The Calcutta Journal*, III (1819), 420, 1056, V (1819), 247, *The Calcutta Government Gazette*, October 7, 1819.

³⁴ *The Calcutta Journal*, I (1820), 416, *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 532, 184.

of maintaining a free press. The ex-censor made no effort to conceal his anger ³⁵

The sensitive officials in the Madras Presidency soon found a more direct means of punishing the troublesome editor than by appealing to the Bengal authorities. Although his papers, in accordance with an agreement with the Bengal Post Office, were marked "Full Post Paid" and were to circulate in all parts of India without additional charges, the Governor-General of Madras ordered them stopped at Ganjam and refused further carriage until more postage was paid. To offset the extra expense imposed upon his Madras readers, Buckingham immediately revised the subscription rates of *The Journal*, and announced the change in a special "Notice to Madras Subscribers," which left no doubt as to his interpretation of the Madras Government's act.

Our Madras Friends are already aware of the measures which have been taken to impede the circulation of this Journal through their Presidency, and will have already formed no doubt a correct opinion, as to the motives in which these measures originated.

As, however, we find our desire to extend its circulation through their Territories rise in proportion to the weight and authority that has been opposed to it, we have determined to make any sacrifice rather than suffer our Friends, in that quarter to be deprived of an opportunity of seeing, now and then, Discussions on Topics which they are not likely to find touched on, in other Indian Prints.

The Journal will therefore be supplied where the additional impost of Madras Postage must be paid at Ten Rupees per Month, the price at which it is delivered to Subscribers in Calcutta.

The sacrifice we now propose will at least be a Voluntary one and we trust that the dissemination of Sound Principles in Politics and Free Inquiry on all topics of great public interests, will meet no checks by this means, but that the Triumph of Liberality over its opposite quality will be full and complete, whatever obstacles may be opposed to it, or in whatever quarter such opposition may originate ³⁶.

The next day after publishing this notice Buckingham received a letter from Bayley, which informed him that the Government considered his remarks highly offensive and demanded an apology to the Madras authorities. The apology was to be submitted to the

³⁵ John Adam, *op. cit.*, 17

³⁶ *The Calcutta Journal*, I (1820), 77, on the postal agreement see *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 538, 33, *Report from the Select Committee* 1834, 64, *The Calcutta Journal*, V (1819), 1

Government within three days and then published in *The Journal*³⁷ But Buckingham chose to defend his remarks Instead of an apology, he composed a long letter stating his case against the Madras Government After pointing out the continuous violation of the Adam circular by his rivals and quoting Hastings's address to support his contention that the press was free, he explained that at first the Madras Government had allowed his paper free carriage and that, although demanding postage from his subscribers, it had allowed other papers carriage without additional charge He admitted having commented on passing events "with that freedom which had only truth for its limits and honest intention of public good for its end," just "as an Englishman would do at home," but regretted having displeased the Government and refused to apologize With reference to the assertion that the Madras Government had impeded the circulation of his paper, he declared, "Neither in the statement of this fact, nor in the expression which follows it, can I therefore see anything which I could honestly express a sense of impropriety in having used" He closed by describing the pain he had suffered as a result of other editors circulating misrepresentations of his offence And not even this was the limit of his boldness in place of an apology he enclosed a letter to be sent to the Madras authorities detailing the losses they had brought upon him³⁸

Now was the time for the Bengal Government to have enforced its demands, but it did not do so On the contrary, Bayley wrote to Buckingham admitting that the latter was correct in his inter-

³⁷ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 532, 96

³⁸ *Ibid*, 93 *et seq* In the subsequent publicity given the official correspondence relative to this affair, a somewhat stronger version of this letter refusing to apologize was circulated by Buckingham, the second text reads as follows " Say for me to His Excellency that if it his pleasure to command

me to leave the country, I have no means, nor indeed could I wish to possess them, of resistance If His Lordship still insists on my expressing a sense of contrition for an act that I cannot avow to be wrong, or my retracting opinions which I sincerely believe to have been correct or on my publicly apologizing for the performance of an act, which when committed I held to be my bounden duty, I feel that I cannot promise compliance" See J S Buckingham, *A Brief Statement of the Principal Events connected with the Question of Summary Transportation without Trial as Punishment for Offences through the Press in India*, 32-45, also *The Oriental Herald*, I (1824), appendix, xv-xxi *The Select Committee Report* 1834, appendix, 9-13, contains the two versions of the letter, the variations of Buckingham's text being printed in red ink On this occasion Buckingham unquestionably took liberties with the truth

pretation of the contract, and blaming an acting Postmaster-General for all the difficulty This official had exceeded his authority in negotiating the agreement, and the Government was powerless to fulfil its obligation The demand for the apology was reduced to the suggestion that Buckingham express his regret at having published remarks so worded that they gave the impression of disrespect

After receiving this letter, Buckingham reviewed the controversy in a second notice to the Madras subscribers He explained the demand for the apology, the recession from the demand, and the admission of the error by the acting Postmaster-General and rejoiced that out of the evil would come more good than could have been achieved by the continuation of the original situation He felt that he had won a notable victory both against the Madras Government and against the Bengal authorities, for in the face of his criticism the former had been exposed as being guilty of discriminating against him, and in the face of his defiance the latter had admitted an error and had receded from a demand

John Adam again dissented from the Government's action He continued to believe that leniency only encouraged the editor

The Journal made the freedom of the press the chief topic of comment during the ensuing months Buckingham quoted Fox, "the blessings which man owed the Press are beyond the reach of the Press to describe", he praised the liberty of the press as "the part and parcel of the law," "part of our daily food," and "the very spirit of our literature" He badgered his opponents with the challenge, "We intend, indeed, to make the liberty of the press a standing title in our pages" But, when an "Unprotected Female" asked protection for her name in his columns, he admitted that "the liberty of the press is a subject of no small difficulty when viewed in all its bearings and details" and advised her to apply for redress to the courts—those same courts which he proclaimed as the only authority to which the press was responsible

Very shortly he had occasion to appear in court as the defendant in a case arising out of his editorial conduct Greenway, the Boat Secretary, brought a libel suit against him for publishing a letter which criticized the inspection of river-boats The plaintiff asked for twenty thousand rupees damages, but the court gave him only one rupee. Buckingham was elated with this verdict, not because the damages were reduced, but because the proceedings were a

precedent for settling cases involving the press through the courts instead of by executive action. His entire position with respect to the freedom of the press was that the editors were bound by English law, and only by that law.

Meanwhile *The Journal* added to its reputation as an effective agent of reform. When "A Young Officer" and "An Old Officer" became involved in an epistolary dispute over the rents exacted by the senior officers who speculated in bungalows at the various outlying military posts, the Government intervened by asking for the name of the "Young Officer." But neither he nor Buckingham was reprimanded, on the contrary, after the evil was investigated, remedial measures were taken. Buckingham saw this episode as a further vindication of his policy, but Adam, all the time growing more apprehensive, considered it only another step in the direction of setting up the public's control over the Government.³⁹

Of a decidedly more serious character was the controversy precipitated by a correspondent who signed himself "Amulaes." His remarks upon "Merit and Interest," which appeared in the November 6, 1820, issue of *The Journal*, touched the quick of Indian society.

No species of merit receives in this country, a commensurate remuneration, but on the contrary, every indication of rising genius is repressed, with the most undisguised, and inconsiderate wantonness, and every excitement and emulation is barbarously and cruelly withheld, except by the pernicious means of political influence or as it is generally termed *interest*, the man of independent mind, who disdains to crouch and to fawn on his superior, is condemned to afflicting and perpetual indigence. His condition closely resembles that of a slave condemned to the galley, who toils with constant and unremitting exertion in the service of a cruel and careless master.⁴⁰

Two days later came a heated reply to this indictment of the official hierarchy by "A Company's Officer," who called "Amulaes" wicked and asked, "Can anything be imagined, to use the language of the libel laws, more 'false, scandalous, and malicious' than this as a picture of our 'Indian system?'" He censured Buckingham for having printed the obnoxious letter. In the same issue Buckingham spoke for himself against "Amulaes," "There is no country in the world where merit is so sure a passport, either in civil or military

³⁹ *The Calcutta Journal*, VI (1820), 36, 93; John Adam, *op. cit.*, 20.

⁴⁰ *The Calcutta Journal*, VI (1820), 71.

service, to eminence," and as an example of the career of talents as realized in India, he cited his own rise to prominence ⁴¹

When the Government referred the "Amulaes" letter to Spankie, he declared it "a libel on the Administration of the country" and recommended the prosecution of the editor. As soon as Buckingham learned of this intention, he appealed to the Government to drop the matter, arguing, since his sentiments were quite the reverse of those expressed by "Amulaes," that he was not guilty of any deliberate wrong. The Advocate-General called this defence "absurd" and went ahead with the case. At the trial Buckingham's attorney, Cutlar Fergusson, argued that his client was innocent of any criminal intention, questioned the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, and asked for a postponement. Spankie supported the jurisdiction of the Court and opposed any delay. Two of the three judges agreed to the postponement, while the other, Judge MacNaghten, took Fergusson's view that the Court had no jurisdiction ⁴²

But all this had been done without the assent of Hastings, who was away from Calcutta at the time ⁴³ When he returned, Buckingham addressed him directly in a letter which disavowed all sympathy and agreement with "Amulaes." Hastings offered to drop the case if Buckingham waived all defence against the criminal information and submitted an apology to be read in the Supreme Court. Two days later the apology was ready. Buckingham denied any malicious intention and accepted full responsibility for the libel, but described the publication of "the Amulaes effusion" as "an act inadvertently done." When the case was called for trial—January 8, 1821—the apology was read, the criminal information was made absolute, and the case was dropped. Adam, who had instigated the prosecution, registered a minute protesting against the outcome. Buckingham narrowly escaped a fine of five hundred pounds and a sentence to a year in prison—almost a death sentence, considering the Indian climate and the conditions in the jails ⁴⁴

⁴¹ *The Calcutta Journal*, VI (1820), 93, 94.

⁴² *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 532, 152, 154, *The Calcutta Government Gazette*, November 23, 1820, and January 11, 1821.

⁴³ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 532, 156.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 177, 180, Vol 538, 147 *et seq.*, *The Report of the Select Committee 1834*, 97. Two forms of procedure were available to the Government for the prosecution of libels in the press, one by *indictment* under the common law, the other by a *criminal information* under statutory provisions (48 Geo III c 58). The Indian officials did not like the first method because it involved a jury trial for the libellant. See *Parliamentary Papers*, IX (1831-32), 115.

Calm then settled over the troubled life of the editor for half a year. When a new storm broke, the Lord Bishop of Calcutta was hurling the thunderbolts, his wrath having been excited by a letter which criticized the conduct of the military chaplains at the interior posts. The author of the letter, who signed himself "A Churchman and a Friend of a Lady on her Deathbed," complained against the practice of chaplains going away on long journeys to perform marriage ceremonies, because their absence left the inhabitants of the posts without the service of a religious ministrant in times of sickness and death. The proud-tempered prelate considered that the letter showed "a want of respect for the public character of the Lord Bishop" and felt it "a duty to self and office" to call it to the attention of the Government. The "glory of God" was not served by the public prints.⁴⁵

When Buckingham was unable to give the author's name to the Government and defended the publication of the letter on the ground that "a temperate and a modest discussion" of the matter "might be productive of public benefit," he was given a sharp reprimand for filling his paper with "loose publications" which harassed the Government and was warned that, if he persisted in his course, his license would be annulled and he would be ordered to quit the country.⁴⁶

This was the threat of transmission at last, but even in the face of such a punishment Buckingham was undismayed. He held his peace for a month, until his "first impression of pain had abated," and then wrote a longer letter than ever in defence of his "much abused Calcutta Journal." He noted with appreciation the Government's early commendation and continued indulgence of his enterprise but stood his ground for the freedom of the press.

evidence of Charles Lushington. Under the second form an officer of the Government, in Bengal the Advocate-General, filed the charge on his own responsibility against the libellant, who, provided that the Supreme Court accepted the information and issued a warrant against him, could be arrested and thrown into jail for an indefinite length of time. Once the warrant was issued the libellant could be held to trial at the pleasure of the authorities. Even if the case was not called for trial or if the libellant was acquitted, he had to pay all the court costs of the action. For a discussion of the libel law and court procedure see William H. Wickwar, *The Struggle for the Freedom of the Press 1819-1832*, 18-48.

⁴⁵ *The Calcutta Journal*, IV (1821), 119, *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 532, 217 *et seq.*

⁴⁶ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 532, 237.

The labours of a public writer who attempts to direct his efforts to the higher duties of a free Press are thus sufficiently discouraged by the abundant return of evil for good, which he is sure to receive from the angry and disappointed feelings of those to whom his animadversions or those of his correspondents may apply. These persons affecting to regard every inquiry or remark connected with their functions as a grave impeachment of their public and private characters, they would put down everything like free discussion, if it were in their power, and I apprehend it is from persons of this description chiefly that Government is harassed with complaint upon complaint against the Calcutta Journal. If I have been more forward than others to vindicate the principle of appeals to the public through the medium of the Press, it is because I estimated more highly so magnificent and valuable a gift as its freedom, and if it be not again taken from us, or so fettered and curtailed as to differ in nothing but in the *risk* from the censorship of former days, I believe that the administration of India, under his Lordship's rule, will never be spoken of by posterity, without their eulogium on this great act, as characterizing at once a Government that had nothing to conceal, and consequently nothing to fear, for if knowledge is power, integrity and justice are the pillars of strength.⁴⁷

Bayley answered this defence in a note of five lines which stated that his letter had "produced no change in the sentiment or resolution of Government," and Buckingham turned to his "Public" with a pamphlet containing all the correspondence which had passed between him and the Indian authorities since his first arrival in Bombay in 1815. He entitled the compilation, *A Brief Statement of the Principal Events Connected with the Question of Summary Transportation without Trial as a Punishment for Offences through the Press in India*. The tract was "neither published nor sold," and circulated, as Adam said, "clandestinely" all over India. Copies were sent also to the chief English newspapers. The ex-censor saw in the compilation only the bold professions of dangerous principles by a man made rash through 'impunity attending his repeated offences.' Buckingham's friends considered Hastings's threat to deport him the only wrong act of his Lordship's career in India. The editor was satisfied to have provoked a public discussion of the law under which he had already been once expelled from the country.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Report from the Select Committee 1834, appendix, 25 Italics are the author's

⁴⁸ Ibid., appendix, 28, John Adam, *op. cit.*, 7, Leicester Stanhope, *Sketch of the History and Influence of The Press in British India, containing remarks on the effect of a Free Press on subsidiary alliances, on delays of justice, on superstition, on the administration of justice, on flogging, and on agriculture, also on the Dangers of a Free Press, and the Licentiousness of a censorship* (London, 1823), 2, *The Calcutta Journal*, V (1821), 652

5. THE INDIAN *JOHN BULL*

Meanwhile Buckingham had vanquished his journalistic rivals. Of those eight sheets, whose snarls had greeted the interloper, by 1820 only three remained, and of them only one, *The Bengal Hurkaru*, kept up what he described as "a peculiar and unabated enmity." But it was weak "Poor slumbering Hurkaru," *The Trifler*, a literary contemporary, recorded, "hard is thy fate, for in thy sad waking hours thou art doomed to the drudgery of selection." Another observer described it as a poor imitation of its successful rival. But *The Hurkaru* was quite able to bicker. All through 1820 the two papers were cheek by jowl in controversy—over the reprinting of parliamentary debates, over the propriety of publishing letters which criticized officers in the army, and over the world-important question of who sent a note to *The Hurkaru* enclosing a wet cracker.⁴⁹ When *The Hurkaru* finally went completely to sleep, *The Calcutta Government Gazette* and *The India Gazette* having earlier given up their hostility, *The Journal* was the undisputed master of the newspaper arena.⁵⁰

This success only increased the opposition to the sailor-editor throughout the conservative element of the Bengal community. In 1819 he catalogued his opponents as "the Law, the Clergy, the Trading (not the Mercantile), the Scotch (except for a few), the Elect and the Select, the Saints and Serviles", in his opinion all were leagued to put him down. In 1820 he counted only "the Mercantiles" among his friends. And the demise of *The Asiatic Journal* and the paralysis of *The Hurkaru* left his enemies without a mouthpiece. While they fumed in an enforced silence, he boasted of and explained his success, "That which contributed to our popularity was the striking preference shown to *The Journal* over all other papers of India, when matters of public interest whether Civil or Military, Scientific or Political were thought worthy of discussion." He saw his policy and himself alike vindicated in the success of *The Journal*.⁵¹

Under these humiliating circumstances there was no alternative for his enemies but to send a challenger into the lists. On June 3,

⁴⁹ *The Trifler*, (1823), 146, William Huggins, *op. cit.*, 59, *The Calcutta Journal*, I (1821), 131

⁵⁰ *The Calcutta Journal*, I (1819), 433, III (1820), 249, IV (1821), 15.

1821, a prospectus announced his coming and left no doubt as to the nature of the battle he meant to wage

JOHN BULL IN THE EAST

QUID VERUM ATQUE DECENS, CURO ET ROGO

John Bull is a *British character* at large,
 'Tis he, or his—where'er you mark a wight—
 Revering Law, yet resolute for right,
 Plain, blunt, his heart with feeling, justice full,
 That is a Briton, that's (thank Heaven) JOHN BULL

While the turbulence of faction serves to agitate and distract the public mind in Great Britain, by fomenting bitter and sanguinary animosities and by dissolving every tie of social affection and public trust, it might be expected that her distant possessions would afford no field for the propagation of delusive doctrines, tending to shake the established order of things by scattering fire brands of discord and discontent around. Yet, however strange it may appear to persons at a distance, the arts which distinguish the disaffected and seditious at home in the public dissemination of their opinions, have been actively employed for some time to impose a false and degrading character on the Indian Press, and to conjure grievances and wrongs into existence, of which the peaceable and enlightened inhabitants of India had before no conception. These arts, indeed, have been largely detected and exposed, but it is not in the nature of Faction to feel abashed by disgrace. Detection only serves to increase its animosity, and exposure produces an enlargement of its exertions, for the purpose of obscuring the light of truth and of just policy, by delusions of extravagant sophistry.

To such an extent has this inveterate hostility against the principles of social order and civil subordination been carried that feelings of general and just indignation have been excited, and the application of an antidote by the establishment of a strictly Constitutional Press has been loudly called for. To meet this natural and expressed desire, and to afford ample opportunity for men of principle and talent to vindicate the most precious blessings of their birthright, a New Paper has been projected, which is the object of this Address to introduce to the notice of the Indian Public.

The pretensions of JOHN BULL could not, perhaps, be better expressed than by saying that it shall endeavour to exhibit a marked contrast to the tone, temper, sentiments, and doctrines, of the CALCUTTA JOURNAL. What it may be, must be seen hereafter—what it shall *not* be, may be told at once. It shall not seek a guilty profit, or a guilty popularity, by reviling our holy religion, by libelling established authorities, by calumniating magistrates, and by insulting public decency, under the pretence of liberty, independence, and free discussion. Under the cloak of these imposing names, the most seditious and inflammatory

principles have been disseminated in India for two years past. Religion is insulted—the laws are defied—liberty is abused, and it is in defence of these, that a call is now made on the free, the orderly, and the pious, to unite, not merely their *wishes* but their *efforts*. It would not become the Editor to speak of his own means of contributing to this great object, but his motives have been fairly stated, and he trusts that those, who approve his principles will concur by their patronage and assistance, by their countenance and their talents to establish the influence and extend the character of John Bull in the East.⁵¹

Now “the Saints and the Serviles” were to have their own organ. *The Bull*’s proprietors were estimable gentlemen, high in the official hierarchy of the Company’s administration—John Trotter, the Opium Agent, Richard Plowden, who, in addition to holding the most lucrative post of Salt Agent at Higgelée, was Collector of the Land Revenue, Thomas Lewin, barrister and Clerk of the Crown in the Supreme Court, and C B Greenlaw, the pluralist of extraordinary renown. Later he became editor of the sheet for a time. But the first to occupy this noble position was James Mackenzie, one time a conductor of *The Hurkaru* and therefore a long-standing adversary of “the journalist.” The party which supported *The Bull* was numerically weak but otherwise powerful, it was the instrument of those who adhered “to Tory and Anglo-Indian conservancy in politics.” Thus respectability took up arms against scurrility and political quackery.⁵²

Once under way the paper fulfilled the promise of its prospectus, in “the hunt to the death” it knew no fairness, offered no quarter, and suffered no relenting. All contemporary evidence agrees that *The Bull* was violent. One observer declared that sense, judgment, and reason availed him not, even the Reverend James Samuel Bryce characterized his language as being more remarkable for strength and violence than for temper and moderation.⁵³ In a mock obituary *The Hurkaru* declared that *The Bull* made a figure near to that of a spread eagle and fell back into the arms of *The Government Gazette*, according to the same authority, the autopsy, performed upon the cadaver, revealed an amazing anatomy—no bowels,

⁵¹ *The Calcutta Journal*, III (1821), 523–524.

⁵² *The Asiatic Journal*, XVIII (1824), 279. *The Trifler*, loc. cit., W. H. Carey, *The Good Old Days of Honourable John Company, being curious reminiscences illustrating manners and customs of British India during the rule of the East India Company from 1600 to 1858* (2 vols., Calcutta, 1906), II, 269, 291.

⁵³ *The Oriental Magazine*, V (1826), 165 et seq., Bryce’s account of the controversy over the free press, *The Trifler*, loc. cit.

a burst diaphragm, an enormously enlarged spleen, a tremendous wind pipe, and a soft brain A minute inspection of this last structure brought to light other enormities, such as a largely evolved organ of combativeness, the complete lack of a sympathetic nerve, a *dura mater* so very *dura* that it blunted the scalpel, and several odd cavities not found in ordinary heads If one can accept the analysis reported by "Alcohol," a correspondent in *The Journal*, the spirit which animated this organism was as remarkable as its structure The analyst described it as a composition of 20 per cent black and fetid bile, 20 5 per cent anti-radical vinegar, 9 4 per cent acid of gall, 9 6 per cent thea viridis, 10 per cent morpheum, 12 per cent oil of wormwood, 18 4 per cent ethereal vapour, and 0.1 per cent Attic salt With such a spirit in such a body no wonder *The Bull* was violent

But *The Journal* was not without a strength and spirit of its own Had not a copy of the paper been found undigested in the stomach of a tiger? And the subscriber who reported the find suggested that the animal had died as a result of its dietary experiment

The Journal lost no time in accepting *The Bull*'s challenge, and in a manner worthy of a champion On June 13 Buckingham answered *The Bull* prospectus He parodied the verse at its head—

Where'er you mark a hypocritic wight,
Praising the law, yet trampling on all Right,
His tongue with oil, his heart with venom full,
This is the Eastern—not the true John Bull—

and countered the charge that his paper was factious

It has been hitherto considered, and may still we think be deemed, a safe way of judging, to estimate the fitness and the excellence of a Government, by the degree of national strength, wealth, and happiness enjoyed under its rule By this standard, then, it must be granted, even by their own shewing, that as "turbulence and animosity" are at the present moment at a greater pitch than at almost any previous period of our history,—that as England, with a soil, a climate, a people, a local position, and laws and institutions, superior in the whole to that enjoyed by any other nation, on the earth, exhibits nevertheless an overwhelming Debt, a burthened Agriculture, a declining Commerce, distressed Manufactures, and a sorely taxed and turbulent people,—the System of Government and the Administration which has brought it to this pitch, must be altogether the worst that ever England since the days of her ancient glory has been doomed to suffer Yet it is this System, and this Government which these searchers after Truth and

Decency put forth all their strength to support If "bitter and sanguinary animosities have been fomented," was not the innocent blood spilt at Manchester, the lives of those slain in Scotland, and the Victims even now daily offered up to the Bank, enough to foment them? and was it Ministers and their Executioners, or the *People*, who shed the first blood in this inhuman warfare?

Our warfare has been directed *against* those who have trampled on the principles of social order, and turned civil subordination into slavery, who have robbed Englishmen of some of their dearest rights, by shackling the Press, restricting Public Meetings, permitting nocturnal domiciliary visits, and rejecting with scorn the just complaints and Petitions of the people

That profit and popularity have been the reward of our exertions we do not deny, but if our wages are not those of the "labourer who is worthy of his hire," and if our popularity is not that which is fairly earned and freely bestowed,—then half the British population of India, from Cape Comorin to Himalayah, and from China to the Cape of Good Hope, are accessories to our crime

54

The Bull's blast and *The Journal's* counterblast sounded the agitations of England more than they spoke the special issues of India, and to understand their proper setting one must glance at the English scene

Although there had been sporadic demands for political reforms during the Napoleonic struggle, nothing like a general popular movement developed until after 1815. In a world of paper money, speculation, and the displacement of labour by machinery such humane efforts as that by Wilberforce, who in 1812 founded the Association for the Relief of the Manufacturing and Labouring Poor, were doomed to failure, and the strident voices which spoke of justice were assured a hearing. The year after Waterloo saw the re-establishment of popular political societies. Twelve months later great petitions were sent to Parliament asking for relief from the burden of taxation and from the payment of the war-debt in gold. The leaders of the awakening people—Hunt, Cartwright, Burdett, Cobbett, and Place—agreed neither upon tactics nor upon a programme of legislation. Some talked of universal suffrage, others discussed a reform of the representation, still others advocated the reduction of the taxes and the repeal of the Corn Laws. But regardless of the moderation of their leaders, the people thought of bread—and the authorities thought of revolution. In 1817 they repealed the right of *habeas corpus*. But this impromptu measure did not

⁵⁴ *The Calcutta Journal*, III (1821), 424-426

stop the agitations, and matters became worse, largely because of an economic crisis. In 1818 firm after firm went down, the master-manufacturers of Lancashire broke an agreement to restore wages to their former level, and mobs gathered in and about Manchester

When Parliament met in 1819 it was evident that something had to be done. The Ministers had temporized since 1815, and the people, as Burdett said, "were gasping for relief." The Whigs proposed a general investigation of the state of the country but were defeated, and instead Parliament accepted the first of the measures that Peel was to bring forward for the relief of the country. The measure provided for the resumption of cash payments by the Bank on the basis of the traditional gold standard. Peel, asserting that "all writers upon political economy" justified such legislation, found his chief ally in Ricardo, the fund holder and political economist, whose fortune had been doubled by the victory of Waterloo. Ricardo called the measure "safe and gentle." Canning explained to those who spoke of the popular distress that the poor laws were connected with "inflammatory topics," and Castlereagh assured his auditors that "the capital of the country would soon be in full employ." Unfortunately the withdrawal of the paper currency, although brought about slowly, afforded no relief for the people. On the contrary, according to the Radicals, the resumption of specie payment only increased their miseries by compelling them to pay the national debt and their own obligations in gold. Cobbett declared that the enforcement of the act would cause the starvation of a million people, and Buckingham talked of "the victims daily sacrificed to the bank."⁵⁵

While Parliament debated, the popular agitations grew louder and took a turn toward what the authorities feared meant violence. The leaders of the people began to teach them to wheel and march, but they carried no arms. At the same time the new Political Unions of Oldham, Middleton, Sheffield, Manchester, and Birmingham held monster meetings, they asked for the franchise and the repeal of the Corn Laws. Meanwhile the Tory press talked of the "swinish multitude," and the authorities grew more apprehensive. When Manchester prepared to follow Birmingham's example and elect a "Legislatorial Attorney and Representative," trouble broke out. The meeting to elect the representative was abandoned in favour of a demonstration for parliamentary reform, which ended in the

⁵⁵ *Parliamentary Debates*, XL (1819), 474 *et seq.*, 676 *et seq.*

catastrophe that the people, mocking Wellington and the Ministers, called "Peterloo" When the news of these events reached India, Buckingham was enraged "We cannot think upon this subject with sufficient coolness to trust our feelings"

In the weeks following the disaster, a wave of indignation swept over the people, and a chill of terror ran over the rich and the noble Hundreds of letters, calling for the suppression of the disorders, reached Lord Sidmouth, the Home Secretary, and he prepared to act Parliament hastily assembled The Whig Lord Althorp moved to inquire into the state of the country, but the Ministers preferred decisive action and carried the notorious Six Acts Lord Ellenborough quoted "the gravest and most venerable authorities of the law" to support repression, and all those who sought "truth and decency," as *The Bull* put it, co-operated in the work Ministers, prelates, judges, magistrates, sabre-swinging yeomanry, jailers, informers, spies, and gibbet men quickly laid the Jacobin spectre in fetters, and during the ensuing months, although Cobbett returned from America bearing Tom Paine's bones, there crept upon the ghost a paralysis worked by the Wesleyan opiate Thistlewood's hair-brained plot to blow up the Ministers only gave an excuse for the continued violence of the authorities.

In concluding the reply to *The Bull's* prospectus, Buckingham reaffirmed his principles, enumerated his services to the Indian public, and called upon it for support. "We address ourselves to those who compare, examine, and think for themselves, and with them we are content to leave the issue of the Question" If "the inhuman warfare" was to come to India, all he asked was the just adjudication and execution of the laws, but those who pursued "truth and decency" cared little for "justice," as he understood the term

During the exchange of these wordy manifestos Adam kept his ever-watchful eye upon *The Journal*, hoping to find some remark or sentiment in its columns that might be made an excuse for embarrassing the editor When Buckingham made a reference to the post-free circulation of *The Bull* prospectus, Adam laid a minute before the Government which declared that the remarks were "a gross affront to the Government" and "a serious aggravation of former offences" Adam urged that Buckingham be made to apologize publicly, but, when Spankie could find no libel in the passage, his vigilance went for nothing⁵⁶

⁵⁶ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 532, 195, 216

Early in July when *The Bull* appeared, the conflict began in all its fury. The vocabulary of controversy—gross, insulting, insolent, malicious, wanton, insidious, nefarious, mischievous, scandalous, and malevolent—was sharpened and burnished in the continuous clashings. An accident in the printing room sullied the first page of *John Bull's* virgin issue with a laugh-provoking error, a line of verse was made to read,

Applauding angels sing, sph'wmmy triuon!

“The journalist” of course seized this opportunity to gloat, exclaiming, “What a loss to posterity!! The burning of the Alexandrian Library was a trifling event compared with this!” A little later when *The Journal* was excluded from the Government House and military headquarters, the Tory sheet had its turn to crow. And all this hullabaloo awoke *The Hurkaru*. It dubbed Buckingham “Jack Cade,” “Jeremy Diddler,” “Ali Baba,” and celebrated his virtues in doggerel

Ass is Gudda, Ahmuq is a Fool,
 Liberal Azad, and Alut a Tool,
 Ally a Prophet is, Babu a Sire,
 And Ali Baba is a Red Hot Radical on Fire!

But Buckingham concentrated his attack on the newer adversary. In an ode “To John Bull in the East, the Posthumous Offspring of the Defunct *Guardian*” he scoffed at *The Bull* and twitted “the old Tories”

Alas! thou drivelling Posthumous Spawn
 Of Baffled Envy'—soon thy d^rvn
 Is overcast,—Poor Tory!
 Thy fleeting days are numbered! Dumb
 Thou shalt be, thine hour is come,
 Thou Loyal Boast and Glory!

At length—*cut up*, and damned, and dead—
 A Worthier Whig reigns in your stead,
 Ransacks your *lock'd* Portfolio,
 The secrets of that Prison-House
 Come forth, with many a Mountain mouse,—
 An Ultra-Loyal Ohio!⁵⁷

⁵⁷ *The Calcutta Journal*, IV (1821), 180, for other squibs see *ibid.*, 76, 662

The letter writers could not be expected to keep out of the mêlée. "A Town Subscriber" assured the public that *John Bull* had secured more subscribers in three weeks than *The Journal* had in three years, called attention to a calmer tone in *The Journal*, and noted in particular the disappearance from its pages of slanderous comments on the great Wellington. He boasted that *The Bull* had not come to the East for nothing. Buckingham's friends answered these assertions "Anthony-out-of-Place" assailed "the counterfeit *Bull*" for supporting a system of "extravagance and corruption" and wished that the keepers of *The Bull* would sink in the mire from which they had crawled, "Observer" scored *The Bull* for his vicious attack upon Buckingham's character, and "Philopatrias" came to the defence of free discussion. He pointed out that a free press had done much good during the controversy over St Andrews's steeple, in the dispute between the select vestry and the parishioners of St John's, in bringing about the legalization of Presbyterian marriages, and in hastening the development of Saugor Island. His sentiments were certainly dangerous.

Whatever Official People may say and believe, or wish others to believe, it is a point pretty well established by the evidence of all History, that great and beneficial Improvements in Administration or Legislature have rarely owed their origin to the deliberate routine of men-of-business.⁵⁸

Adam's watchful eye must have missed that sentence, for no charge of libel was brought against Buckingham on account of its publication.

As the altercation dragged on, becoming more fierce and more futile, Buckingham attempted to drop the evil thing, but without success. *The Bull* kept too close upon him. At last in desperation he asked the public to reflect upon the four press rules and *John Bull's* guilt in having broken each of them. In particular he called attention to the fourth regulation, which forbade the publication of private scandal and remarks on individuals.

As to the 4th or last—God preserve us! If "private Scandal and personal remarks on Individuals tending to excite dissension in Society," be the summing up of these Restrictions on the Press, there is not a man in India who can lay his hand on his heart and say, that *JOHN BULL* is not the greatest offender against these rules that India has ever yet seen!⁵⁹

⁵⁸ *The Calcutta Journal*, V (1821), 70

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, VI (1822), 668.

As a contemporary said of *The Bull*, "When he would hunt an opponent to the death, no matter how, the triumph is accomplished "⁶⁰ Buckingham was attacked by a clique which knew neither fairness nor mercy.

6 OLD TORY TACTICS

"Sam Sobersides" was uncomfortable at Chowringhee dinner parties.

Conceive from seventy or eighty ladies and gentlemen (with more than twice the number of black servants behind them) stowed together, of a sultry evening , as close as the stow wool or cotton in a Free Trader, conceive me, hot as Falstaff in the dirty clothes basket, seated between two ladies of "high standing" who are as cool as melons on the side board, with a turkey before me to carve, as large as an ostrich and three or four side dishes to help, besides all the time casting my eyes round to the right and left, the perspiration dropping like April Showers from my forehead

And he was bored to death at formal balls

Military men in comfortable warm woollen coats, buttoned up to the throat, with tight pantaloons and boots, and ungainly cap or cock'd-hat under the arm, and a sword quarrelling with their legs—Civilians a little more at their ease, but throttled in a Dandy neckloth brought from Moscow, unable to turn the head without turning the body The thermometer (without the company in the room) is at 89° and not a breath of air from the heavens On entering the room, we see a couple of dozen ladies ranged by themselves on formal rows of chairs, like trees in the avenues of a Dutchman's pleasure grounds, and four or five dozen harnessed gentlemen as above described, moping about or in groups by themselves, at a loss to whom to talk or what to say A aide-de-camp or a dragoon makes a little noise with his shod heels and clattering armour, coming up the stairs, and for a few minutes draws the gaze of the rest of the party upon him, but the butterfly mixes among the drones, and the languid conversation is resumed among those who have anything to say ⁶¹

"Sam" complained of the "retired, selfish, lonely, and churlish habits" which featured Bengal society He wished to draw the ladies into the conversation at the parties and dinners, if for no other reason than to enliven the gatherings with cheerful chatter And he asked for a reform in dress, for an informal and loose attire

⁶⁰ *The Tryster, loc. cit.*

⁶¹ *The Calcutta Journal, V (1821), 453.*

to relieve the heat In his zeal he audaciously stated that the first act of His Majesty the King, if he should come to Calcutta, would be to reduce the size of the shako—the prevailing style of military headdress—from a weight near that of a quarter of beef to a more reasonable proportion The King knew how to make men comfortable, and “Sam” could see no reason why other official persons might not unbend a little for the sake of comfort and gaiety

But he soon found opponents to his well-meant proposals “Parenthesis” censured him for maligning the Government and for attacking “our good old English manners”, he was apprehensive that “Sam’s” recommendations would lead to dining in shirtsleeves and to the “Frenchifying” of the people with the soft elegancies of the waltz “Maria May-Pole,” who admitted a love for criticism and reform, doubted if “Sam” ever intended to introduce the waltz and “the improper freedom which an English mind associates with that Species of Dancing”

“Sam” replied to “Parenthesis” with some heat After comparing the opposition to his proposed reforms to a sinner’s love for his vices, he answered the charge of maligning the Government

I think it no ways inconsistent with my respect for them, one and all [*i.e.*, the Government] to call, as far as an humble individual can hope to do, the public attention to any matter of abuse, inconvenience, or subject of complaint, which it is always in the power of the Public to redress or to get redressed, and if I saw things going on wrong in the family of my own father, I would cry out and expose them to him But if no wrongs are to be redressed, or suggested improvements listened to, except those which go through Secretaries and Public Officers to the Government, none will be redressed or listened to but those whom they favour, and the influence of their favour (as that of their displeasure) extends further than the Government can be aware of, some striking examples of which will be brought to their notice, by your fearless Correspondent ⁶²

During the months of September and October, 1821, this merry controversy enlivened the columns of *The Journal* without any one ever suspecting that in such an exchange of opinions might be found libels and criminally intended slanders But in the hot-house atmosphere of Calcutta innocent discussions often blossomed with noxious sentiments, and so it happened in the case of the solemn satires of “Sam Sobersides” In a short week after the publication of the reply to “Parenthesis,” the editor of *The Journal* found himself

⁶² *The Calcutta Journal* V (1821), 606 The italics are the author’s

the defendant in a libel suit brought in the name of the seven chief Secretaries of the Government. And that was not all. Before another week had passed, besides being the subject of a minute to the Governor-General in Council by John Adam, he was charged by the Advocate-General with criminal libel.⁶³

Buckingham greeted the notification of the libel suit with a tolerant smile and declared a willingness to leave his cause to "Twelve Common Tradesmen of Calcutta," whom he credited with a surer sense of justice than that possessed by any single man, no matter how discreet he might be. The bill of indictment was, he said in sarcasm, a "formidable document thirteen feet by two in size and so long that it could not be copied in two hours." Correspondents added bite to his irony. "Parenthesis" withdrew his criticisms of "Sobersides," "Sam" anathematized "the forty hungry attorneys" who thrived on such carrion, and "Richard Fubbs" expressed bitter grief that "any gentlemen of real talent" could have been found to serve as a grand jury for bringing such an indictment. At the same time Buckingham found it necessary to refuse to publish letters which attacked the monopoly of the attorneys and the abuses of patronage in India. He warned his readers that the sentiments expressed in these letters were dangerous. At the same time he informed his public that, although a series of costly libel trials would ruin any man financially, no combination of wealth and power could subdue the free spirit of an Englishman. He called upon public opinion to manifest its power, closing his appeal by quoting in italics from Hastings's reply to the Madras address those praises which the Governor-General had bestowed upon the spirit "*to be found only in men accustomed to indulge and to express their honest sentiments*." Buckingham boasted that he would call his opponents before the bar of public opinion and deal with them single-handed.

This bold use of the Governor-General's words aroused Adam to immediate action. On the day following their publication he laid a minute before the Council in which he charged that the editor had insulted the Government "in the face of the world."⁶⁴ Adam expressed a lack of confidence in the Court's ability to correct abuses in the press and assured the Council that he was held back from recommending the immediate transmission of the obnoxious editor only on account of the impression that would be created, if such

⁶³ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 532, 321, 331

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 291

actions were taken before the libel case came to trial. He described Buckingham as the instrument of a party whose object was to destroy all deference and respect for the Government. In spite of this alarmist view of the situation, in which the other members of the Council concurred, Hastings was not stampeded into rash action.⁶⁵ He admitted there was "a knot of persons" whose activities were having a bad influence on the younger men in the service but did not believe so serious a punishment should be laid upon any man "unless the necessity for it was broadly visible." Hastings found the most serious aspect of the case in the rumour that a public subscription was to be raised to support the editor in his defence against the Secretaries. But the subscription never got beyond the stage of rumour.

Spankie moved for a criminal information on the ground that Buckingham had thwarted the course of justice and called upon the Court to put a stop to the publication of sentiments intended "to lacerate the feelings of others from day to day."⁶⁶ Buckingham accepted this move with an impudent nonchalance. After reporting the action of the Advocate-General he added, "We return to our English Extracts, which some will think are quite as libellous as anything we have composed," and quoted from *The Glasgow Journal* for May 18, 1821, an article containing much praise for his paper. Buckingham never showed his enemies the white feather, always talons and a chattering beak.

The application for the criminal information was heard before a crowded court room and a full bench. Spankie accused the editor of attempting to influence the petit jury that was to try the libel charge, of intimidating future grand juries through his reflection on the conduct of past grand juries, and finally of attacking the prosecutors of the impending libel case, these crimes Spankie found in Buckingham's mention of the "Twelve Common Tradesmen" and in "Richard Fubbs's" aspersions on the grand jury whose members had drawn the libel indictment. One cannot help but marvel at the skill, learning, erudition, and mystical intuition by which such intentions and tendencies were discovered by Buckingham's enemies—no matter whom, the Lord Bishop, the Secretaries, John Adam, or the Advocate-General—in the materials which excited their wrath. Cutlar Fergusson argued eloquently for the defendant. He pointed out that every one believed in a jury

⁶⁵ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 532, 302

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* 285 *et seq.*

trial, even the Secretaries and the Government. He assured the judges that *The Journal* was no whispering gallery for the dissemination of private slanders. As a final appeal he called upon the Court to witness that the hand of every man was turned against his client. Two of the judges, Sir Edward Hyde East and Sir Anthony Buller, approved the criminal information, the third, Sir Francis MacNaghten, again declared that the Court was without jurisdiction.⁶⁷

The rule for the criminal information having been made absolute, Buckingham was placed under the threat of an immediate imprisonment. At any time convenient to the Government he could be brought to trial. But the Government chose to delay its action until the Secretaries' libel charge was heard.

This suit came before the Supreme Court early in January, 1822, and again the court room was crowded. Prominent merchants and native baboos were to be seen in the "multitude," as *The Calcutta Government Gazette* described the assemblage, and the popular feeling was tense. There was the defendant, the notorious editor, of whom every one wished to catch a glimpse. And there were the outraged plaintiffs, the Government Secretaries—Bayley, who was in charge of the Judicial Department as well as Chief Secretary to the Government, Lushington of the General and Foreign Department, Swinton of the Political Department, Prinzeps of the Persian Department, and Casement, the Secretary for Military Affairs. But now there was only one judge, Sir Francis MacNaghten, and the "Twelve Common Tradesmen of Calcutta" to do justice.⁶⁸

Mr. Money opened the case for the plaintiffs by reading the libel, the last sentence from "Sam Sobersides's" letter of October 25:

But if no wrongs are to be redressed except those which go through the Secretaries and Public Officers to the Government, none will be redressed.⁶⁹

The Advocate-General then presented the indictment of ten counts, four establishing that Buckingham was owner, proprietor, printer, and publisher of *The Calcutta Journal* and six stating the specific libel on each Secretary. Spankie began his plea by arguing that bad grammar was no defence, after which he expounded what he called

⁶⁷ *The Calcutta Government Gazette*, November 22, 1821.

⁶⁸ *Parliamentary Papers*, IX (1831-32), 115, *The Calcutta Government Gazette*, January 24, 1822.

⁶⁹ *The Calcutta Journal*, I (1822), 209.

the correct view of the liberty of the press, namely, the liberty of the press did not mean that a man was to have a right to assail his neighbours or to irritate and disturb the Government He declared that "Sobersides" had accused the Secretaries of a breach of their public duty that was the libel Fergusson, speaking for Buckingham, was more eloquent than ever He described the "Sobersides" letter as a joke He asserted that the liberty of the press was more calumniated against than any individual except his client, against whom, he said, the entire licentiousness of the press was directed He sealed his plea by submitting that the only faction which existed was one that aimed to overthrow the freedom of the press The court room was stirred by his oratory

At the close of the arguments Judge MacNaghten gave the case to the jury without an opinion, only charging it to answer the question, "Does the passage bear on the character of the prosecutors?" The jury retired and returned almost at once, its members filling the court room with exclamations of "Not Guilty! Not Guilty!" and causing an uproar of jubilation

Buckingham's faith in "Twelve Common Tradesmen" had not been misplaced, but he regretted that the felicitations, which came to him as a result of the verdict, had disturbed the solemnity of the judicial tribunal The Court, he said, could not be too much respected When he was informed that the costs were six hundred pounds, he observed that, while his enemies were slandering him daily, he was made to pay heavily for publishing what a jury pronounced innocent

The Advocate-General now pressed for a trial of the criminal information, but MacNaghten refused to hear the case In addition to holding that the Court had no jurisdiction, he gave the opinion that the rule was "cruel, oppressive, and illegal" After a lapse of several months Fergusson inquired of Spankie as to the Government's intentions about further prosecution of the information and was given to understand that nothing more would ever be heard of the matter Spankie was mistaken These events attracted some attention in England, and *The Scotsman*, an influential Whig organ, castigated the Bengal administration and applauded the editor who persisted in his fight for a free press ⁷⁰

In April when the newspapers were asked not to publish Sir John

⁷⁰ J S Buckingham, *A Brief History of the Banishment of Mr Buckingham from India* (London, 1823), 1, *The Scotsman*, April 13, 1822

Malcolm's report on the military situation in Central India, the request did not reach Buckingham in time to prevent his first excerpt from going to press, for this he was given a mild reprimand. But greater trouble was soon at hand, coming in May when he published a letter from a correspondent who signed himself "A Military Friend, neither a Mull or a Gull." After praising *The Journal* and its editor for having done more good for India than all the laws enacted by the Government, the correspondent offered some remarks on that subject which "Amulaes" two years before had touched upon, namely, promotions in the army. He closed with a postscript even more dangerous in its sentiments:

I congratulate the Natives from the bottom of my heart, at the good you [Buckingham] have already done them, and I hope to see the time when it will no longer be in the power of those who are supposed to protect them from fraud and violence to harass them *even in legal courts, and under rules and regulations*⁷¹

This letter was like a barbed shaft to an already infuriated beast, and the Government at once demanded the name of the author. When Buckingham delayed giving the name until he had communicated with the correspondent—a Lieutenant-Colonel Robinson stationed at Nagpoor—Lushington threatened to hold him personally responsible for the letter. As usual Buckingham replied with a courteous denial of having meant any offence. In a later note he pleaded that the publication of the letter was "an unintentional error," arguing "When judgment of government, rather than laws of England, or clearly defined Regulation is made the criterion of offence, it is impossible but that unintentional error shall at least risk being construed in their estimation as deliberate crime." After asking that "his high sense of the just though still indulgent construction of his professions" be conveyed to the Governor-General, he promised once more "to exercise that additional scrutiny and caution which his Lordship required."⁷²

But in spite of these protestations the editor's fate was in the balance. Adam, supported by the other councillors, Bayley and Fendall, recommended in written minutes that Robinson should be removed from his command and that Buckingham should be ordered out of the country.⁷³ This action by the Council irritated

⁷¹ *The Calcutta Journal*, III (1822), 239. The italics are the author's.

⁷² *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 532, 419.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 375, 402.

Hastings because it placed him in the dilemma of submitting to their judgment or of answering their charges, he chose the latter course and embodied his view of the position of the press and Buckingham's conduct in a minute dated June 1, 1822 ⁷⁴

Hastings admitted that Buckingham had abused the freedom of the press but did not agree with Adam's view of the case, which he summarized

The position of Mr Adam, in which his colleagues concur, is this. That as Mr Buckingham resides in India merely on a License, revocable at pleasure and granted on the understood pledge of unoffensive conduct, it is just, as well as expedient, to insist on his quitting the Country when his further stay would be injurious to the public welfare ⁷⁵

The Governor-General argued that the matter was not quite so clear, uncomplicated, and just, pointing out that Buckingham was not in India as an "interloper" or by a breach of the law, and opposed the view that Buckingham's presence was dangerous to the state

Nor have I the slightest surmise that a spirit anyway dangerous or even meriting the epithet of troublesome has been generated Injury, therefore, to the Public Welfare seems to me to be too loosely assumed. ⁷⁶

He then attacked the justice of immediate transmission as a punishment

Were a Tribunal possessing unlimited Right of Punishment to award in any instance a Penalty grievously and oppressively disproportionate, the general voice of Society would reprobate such an undue exaggeration of Rigor. Then there must be something essentially wrong in that which could so widely disgust moral Feeling. The expelling Mr Buckingham from India, for an offence, the scale of which I am to fix, inflicts upon him the certain extinction of Promising Fortunes, if it do not immediately effect his absolute Ruin. I cannot interpose mitigation in what I decree. Is it not equitable then to ask whether it be really indispensable to push Chastisement to such an extreme? That Mr Buckingham has misbehaved grossly is admitted. It is some extenuation that convenient limits for Freedom of the Press have no where been defined. In this country many discussions are objectionable which would be indifferent in Europe. But this is distinctly seen only by us who from our situation have a more extensive view than can be attained by an Editor. Certainly when reprobated for aberrations Mr Buckingham

⁷⁴ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 532, 411

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 413

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 414

has shewn a petulant forwardness from imitation of the affected Independence of News Paper Publishers at home Still the question recurs "Is it not more just to chasten with moderation than to overwhelm?"⁷⁷

According to Hastings, Buckingham's writings, although "indiscreet," were "natural" and certainly not "contumacious," and the Governor-General refused to accept the opinion of his councillors "For the future," he informed them, "I must have hopes of his [Buckingham's] caution, nor is that hope the weaker for his not having used servility of expression"

Certainly Hastings's view of Buckingham's conduct seems sane and wholesome when compared with that of the editor's enemies as they advised the Government or sought redress in the courts From the point of view of personal security Buckingham undoubtedly was indiscreet, but that he aimed to endanger English power in India in any way was obviously a dream of disordered minds Moreover, after reading the items which excited the wrath of Adam and his "old Tory" associates, one can smile at that description of *The Journal* which declared that it "lent itself to the utterance of morbid discontent and personal resentments—assailed the conduct of private individuals—impeached the acts of public functionaries—spread acrimonious dissensions through society, and defied, while it affected to deprecate, the displeasure of the government"⁷⁸ How the shade of "Sam Sobersides" must shake with laughter at such serious consideration from an historian! Buckingham's indiscretion lay in his attacks upon the privileges and abuses by which "the old Tories" maintained a silence over their public conduct And his troubles arose from the unprincipled, arbitrary, senseless, and pusillanimous acts by which they hoped to bring about his destruction It is to Hastings's credit that wisdom saved him from becoming the instrument either of a petty persecution or of a vindictive injustice

But if the editor escaped the consequence of his acts, such was not the case with the author of the letter When the Government inquired of Robinson the meaning of his remarks, he answered heatedly, an indiscretion which brought him before a court martial, He then offered to retract, and the Court recommended mercy, but Hastings was in no mood for leniency He disregarded the recom-

⁷⁷ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 532, 415

⁷⁸ Alexander Andrews, *History of British Journalism* (2 vols., London, 1859), II, 159.

mendation, ordered Robinson home, and followed up this action with "General Orders to the Army," which forbade officers from "addressing Anonymous Complaints to the Public through the Newspapers" Hastings described such conduct by an officer as "casting off his just and requisite dependence on his Military Superiors" Robinson died on the way to England

Among all the abuses by which the members of the official hierarchy profited and which they therefore defended, the holding of several offices by one man was the most common More than one favoured appointee accumulated a fortune in a short time by such a multiplication of salaries, for example, Greenlaw, a part-owner of *John Bull*, held six posts under the Government and three positions in private undertakings, from which he drew various sums amounting to more than £275 per month⁷⁹ This system of pluralities was the simple device by which favouritism and patronage exploited the Government

In July, 1822, when a place as superintendent of a medical school for natives was created for a certain Dr Jameson, who already held three positions—Secretary of the Medical Board, Clerk to the Committee for Controlling the Expenditure of Stationery, and Surgeon of the Free School—Buckingham did not hesitate to attack the system

Now without having anything to do with Mr Surgeon Jameson's personal or private character, which is altogether out of our province, and which we should never think of meddling with, even if it should be *proved* that he has not observed the same rule of forbearance towards us—we may at least be permitted to say that we doubt his fitness for the office of superintending the Native Institutions, from an opinion that he does not possess the eminent qualifications before enumerated, and which appear to us requisite for such a purpose

* * * *

But because we have mentioned Mr JAMESON's name—as Mr CANNING does that of Mr CREEVEY, or JOHN BULL that of Mr HUME —let it not be said that we are *personal* We never have had, and never shall have to do with Mr Jameson's private relations of life, as a Husband, a Father, or a Member of Society (we wish all men in India were as free to unburthen their consciences on this point)—we speak of him only as a public character, and no mean one either, or he never could have attained the eminence from which he now looks

⁷⁹ *The Calcutta Annual Directory and Register for 1823*, civil index, vi, also *The Oriental Herald*, IX (1826), 36

down on so many of his fellow-servants far above him in years and length of service, as Secretary of Two Boards, Surgeon of one Institution, and Superintendent, Controller, and Lecturer of another⁸⁰

As the first man to be named in a public discussion as a pluralist, Jameson was highly indignant. He asked the Government to expel Buckingham, and Adam, who prepared another minute on the editor's conduct, supported the request. The ex-censor argued that a party had banded together to canvass openly the acts of public officials who were responsible only to authorities in England. He deplored this introduction of factional spirit into India and recommended the restoration of the censorship as the means of suppressing it. But his efforts again went for nothing, for Hastings would not intercede⁸¹

Having failed to find balm for his injured feelings in governmental intervention, Jameson demanded that Buckingham stop mentioning his name in *The Journal*, in case this pledge was not given, Jameson let it be known that he would demand satisfaction in a duel. When Buckingham was informed of this threat, he refused to give any such pledge, defended his right to comment on the public character of individuals, and offered to meet Jameson whenever and wherever the latter desired.

After this exchange of views, seconds were chosen, Buckingham securing a Major Sweeney. A Mr Gordon acted for Jameson. Sweeney called upon Gordon and repeated Buckingham's disavowal of commenting upon Jameson's private character, but refused for his principal to give any other apology. Gordon replied by demanding for Jameson the satisfaction of a personal encounter.

Just as the Indian sun was rising on the morning of August 5, 1822, the editor and the surgeon met in the shadow of a great tree on the Ballygunge race track. The weapons were pistols at twelve paces. They fired once—into the air. They fired again—into the air. As they reloaded for the third exchange, Sweeney informed Gordon that Buckingham again disavowed any intention of reflecting on Jameson's private character, also that he refused to make any other apology and would not be responsible for what might happen if the affair was not ended. Gordon answered him by declaring that Buckingham had done all that a man of honour could do and that Jameson did not demand further satisfaction.

⁸⁰ *The Calcutta Journal*, IV (1822), 409, 411.

⁸¹ John Adam, *op. cit.*, 40, *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 532, 534-567.

The party then returned to the more crowded places of the city, where the seconds at once drew up a public statement describing the encounter and its outcome.

In commenting upon this statement, *The Hurkaru* said, "After reading the account of the seconds, we are convinced that the characters of the contestants will stand as high, if not higher than before." The local yearly chronicle listed the engagement as "an accident."⁸²

But peace did not come to the spirited editor. The Government watched him closely. In the last week of July he was ordered to send to the Chief Secretary a file of an advertising sheet, which he was publishing separately from *The Journal*. In August, together with all the other editors, he was reprimanded for insulting the King of Oude and his relentless enemies, *The Bull* and *The Hurkaru*, kept up their sniping. The latter announced in a sarcastic letter over the signature, "A Radical Reformer," that the editor of *The Calcutta Journal* was "a self-constituted Board of Control of Affairs for India" and described his ardour in performing the duties of the office in terms that left no doubt as to how he appeared to his opponents.

The zeal and public spirit of the Editor cannot be sufficiently admired. He will rank in after ages with those great men who have zealously united to serve the public for nothing, such as Archbishop Carlile, Bishop Hume, Lord Chancellor Hunt, President of the Council Cobbett, Chancellor of the Exchequer Hume, and many other British worthies.⁸³

Before August was out the newspaper wrangling developed into a dispute more bitter than any which had preceded it.

When *The Bull* quoted an English paper to the effect that the policy of the Indian Government toward the press "displayed the caprice of an Indian despot, who engages eagerly in a scheme of which he does not see the consequences," Buckingham considered that the extract reflected on Hastings and answered it with a defence of the abolition of the censorship. *The Bull* countered with the assertion that the Governor-General had never meant to free the press, in fact the Tory advocate declared that it had never

⁸² On the Jameson duel see *The Asiatic Journal*, XV (1823), 181, *The Bengal Hurkaru*, XXXIV (1822), 341, *The Calcutta Annual Register* 1822, 200, *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 532, 600, "Authoritative Statement of the Duel, signed by the seconds."

⁸³ *The Bengal Hurkaru*, XXXIV (1822), 286

heard of a free press in India until *The Journal* had mentioned it in commenting on the English extract. Buckingham answered this impudent sarcasm by citing Hastings's reply to the Madras address, which drew from *The Bull* a retort that the Governor-General did not have the power to free the press and that he had never uttered the oft-quoted sentiments ⁸⁴

Buckingham replied to this plain distortion of the truth in an article entitled, "Defence of the Marquis of Hastings against the attacks of *John Bull*," and closed with the pertinent question, "Is it possible that a person professing respect for the Government of the country can thus slander its Supreme head?" In the next issue of *The Journal*, August 31, 1822, he summarized the issues in the dispute and emphasized his contention that the press was free by pointing out that the Adam circular did not have the force of law

In point of fact, and in point of Law, the Restrictions of June 1818 are mere waste paper. They have never been passed into a Regulation, in the only legal manner in which Regulations can acquire the force of law by the sanction of the Supreme Court, and are of no more force or value than would be a Circular of the Governor General in Council, commanding us to give up our Residence for the accommodation of the King of Oudh, if he were to visit Calcutta, or to give up our beds to his seraglio, and our table to his servants ⁸⁵

He attacked also the Tory doctrine that transmission was the proper punishment for the violation of these rules "Transmission for offences through the press is a power wholly unknown to the law. Irresponsible power is nowhere to be found acknowledged in the Law or Constitution of England." He ended by exclaiming, "The more the monstrous doctrine of transmission is examined, the more it must excite the abhorrence of all just minds."

As this controversy became more heated, *The Hurkaru* faced about to support *The Journal*. On the day that Buckingham attacked the legality of the Adam circular, *The Hurkaru* declared, "The Press is, if not *de jure*, at least *de facto* free," and amplified the declaration by a comment on the result of Hastings's policy

The four years experience we have had, satisfactorily proves that the evils apprehended, either have not been verified, or have turned out

⁸⁴ J S Buckingham, *A Faithful History of the Late Discussions in Bengal on the Power of Transportation Without Trial* (Calcutta, 1823), 19; *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 532, 827

⁸⁵ *The Calcutta Journal*, IV (1822), 850, John Adam, *op. cit.* 43

of so minor a nature that the extraordinary powers kept in reserve have never been called into action ⁸⁶

The Hurkaru asked, "Why should a Moslem, a Hindu, a Jew, or a Turk be more fit to enjoy a free press than a Freeborn Englishman?" and charged *The Bull* with having "a petty spite" against the freedom of the press. At the same time *The Hurkaru* accused Buckingham of desiring to be sent home, indeed, it asserted that he should have been transmitted long ago. Buckingham answered this accusation by again denying the Government's right to transmit him and by arguing that the law and a jury were the only authorities over the press. Early in September *The Bull*, in reply to his attack on transmission, had opposed this allegation by publishing what was purported to be a quotation from his license to reside in India, in which the right of transmission was explicitly stated. Buckingham easily showed that *The Bull* had deliberately misquoted the document. A little later when *The Bull* attacked *The Hurkaru* as being nothing more than a deputy of *The Journal*, *The Hurkaru* exposed *The Bull's* use of spies, and in another article, "Humbug Exposed, or John Bull's Pretensions to Truth, Honour, and Impartiality," described the partisan bias of the "infamous sheet" ⁸⁷

That all this wrangling should go on without some statement in *The Journal* exciting the wrath of Adam was not to be expected. On the day following Buckingham's review of the original dispute with *The Bull*, Adam laid a minute before the Supreme Council in which he demanded either that the editor's license be revoked or that he be given "one final warning." The minute pointed out that the editor, in attacking the power of transmission, not only had impeached the authority of the Government but also had questioned the supremacy of Parliament. The decision of the Council was sent to Buckingham in a letter dated September 5, 1822.

You are now finally apprised, that if you shall again venture to impeach the validity of the Statute quoted (53 George III c 155 s 36), and the Legitimacy of the Power vested by it in the Chief Authority here, or shall treat with disregard any official Injunction, past or future, from Government, whether communicated in terms of Command, or in the gentler language of intimation, your License will immediately be cancelled, and you will be ordered to depart forthwith from India ⁸⁸

⁸⁶ *The Bengal Hurkaru*, XXXIV (1822), 549

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, XL (1822), 83, 369, XLI (1822), 133, 442.

⁸⁸ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 532, 7¹⁷.

Buckingham replied by recapitulating the issues in the newspaper dispute. He called attention again to *The Bull's* aspersions upon Hastings and his own efforts to defend the head of the Government. He flatly denied ever having questioned the powers of transmission but asserted that honest differences of opinion might exist in regard to the interpretation of the statute which authorized the power. In regard to the freedom of the press he remarked, "it is now clear, that for Englishborn Editors, who may be transmitted for maintaining abstract opinions as to its existence or total annihilation, no such freedom can be supposed longer to exist. It is likely that His Lordship in Council will never more be troubled with dissertations upon a subject now so entirely set at rest." He closed the letter by declaring his readiness to obey any injunction that might be laid upon him.⁸⁹ But his real sentiments were revealed in *The Journal* where he wrote, "In a court of law, indeed, rectitude of intention is a shield, but in the hold of a chartered ship it is none. In the former, too, an able counsel and a just cause are defensive weapons, but in the latter they are of no avail." Before arbitrary power Buckingham realized there was no defence.

Bayley and Fendall supported Adam in his contention that Buckingham should be punished. Bayley registered a minute in which he advocated the establishment of the licensing system as a means of controlling the newspapers. He recalled that the censorship had been abolished because native-born editors could not be deported and he warned the Governor-General of the danger which would arise if the native press were not muzzled. Inasmuch as the native sheets were showing skill in making insinuations against English power, his nervousness was not groundless. On the very day that he laid his minute before the council, *Mirat-ul-Akhbar*, a Persian paper, printed an article, "Ireland, the Causes of its Distress and Discontent," the opening sentence of which read, "The Kings of England, having shut their eyes against justice, gifted away to their own parasites the estates of the Irish noblemen." In the same paper were comments upon the insolence which characterized the English treatment of the natives, especially upon the roads. The two Bengalee papers were tinted with "Whiggism." And one of the native editors had given a dinner in honour of the Spanish revolution. Bayley's minute also called attention to the statement

⁸⁹ *Report from the Select Committee* 1834, appendix, 38

in a native paper that the King of England had appointed Buckingham as a censor over the Indian Government⁹⁰

As in the previous discussion of Buckingham by the Council, Hastings stood alone against the use of arbitrary power to rid India of the editor's presence. The Governor-General again admitted the existence of "a mischievous set," small in numbers and animated by vanity, but felt that "an intemperate use of power would be playing into its hands." The editor, he said, was merely "a tool," not the real offender. Nor could he see anything so evil in the Jameson affair, of which Bayley had made so much.⁹¹ In this last crisis arising from his press policy, Hastings maintained that sense of humour and good judgment which had characterized his administration. He never hesitated to joke about the fears of his councillors. When Buckingham applied to him for permission to visit Agra and Delhi, he answered that the Council would never concur unless Buckingham gave security that he would not set the Ganges on fire. Unfortunately for Buckingham, Hastings was giving up his post with the coming of the new year.

7 EXPelled FROM INDIA

The editors of *The Bull* came and went with a startling regularity, no less than four gentlemen having held the honourable post in the first year of the paper's career, and October, 1822, saw the elevation of still another most estimable individual to the position. This new editor was the Reverend Samuel James Bryce. Late in September he had returned to Calcutta from a year's leave of absence in England and Scotland, where his talents had been exercised in ecclesiastical controversy. One can guess that the first scent of the heated atmosphere of Bengal was fire to his blood. The effect of his appointment as editor of *The Bull* was quickly evidenced in a most unprincipled attack upon his old rival. Now, in open and shameless defiance of the fourth article of the Adam circular, charges were made against Buckingham's private character.

⁹⁰ Sophia Dobson Collett, *Life and Letters of Ram Mohun Roy* (Calcutta, 1913), 97, P. R. Krishnaswami, *Bishop Heber's Indian Journal A Selection and an Introduction* (London, 1923), 209, *Report from the Select Committee*

. 1834, 103

⁹¹ *Report from the Select Committee* 1834, 102

Bryce plainly agreed with Buckingham that the press regulations were "mere waste paper."⁹²

The slanders were embodied in a series of letters which appeared in *The Bull* during November and December, 1822, and January, 1823. No description of the unfairness of these charges is possible. The missives must tell their own story. The first letter only promised to reveal the infamous character of the popular editor.

SIR—

On my arrival here, about a month ago, a defence of Buckingham's Travels in Palestine, against the stricture of the Quarterly Review was put into my hand. I have to beg, that the Indian Public will suspend their judgment, on the merits of this dispute, so far as the character and conduct of Mr. Bankes are implicated until that gentleman's reply, and I pledge myself, that a scene of iniquity and falsehood will be displayed which will astonish and disgust every man of honourable feeling. You have been duped by the most artful of adventurers, but the hour of exposure approaches.

Yours, A FRIEND OF MR BANKES⁹³

The venom of this attack, as well as the fulfilment of its promise, can be judged from the remainder of the letters.

"A Scot" followed "A Friend of Mr. Bankes" to the assault.

But this man, having tried every means, supplied by a half stock, or fractional share of knowledge, in almost every branch of literature and science, to save himself from absolute starvation,—was a few years ago reduced to his last shilling, and his last shift,—when certain politicians

pressed into their service this ADVENTURER,—ready and willing to libel a world which he execrated, and to stand prosecutions and brave the laws, provided, for such were his terms,—“they would make it worth his while.”⁹⁴

Two missives by heroic “Nigel,” who called upon “society” to ban the “impostor” from its assemblies, followed this concoction of half-truths. “Will not,” “Nigel” asked, “the confidence of the Government be impaired in those who associate with him?” He closed with a hyper-delicate sentiment.

Let him indulge his licentiousness during the short period he may be allowed to do so with impunity, my business is not with that, all

⁹² Report from the Select Committee 1834, 66, *The India Gazette*, September 19, 1822, J. S. Buckingham, *A Brief History of the Banishment of Mr. Buckingham from India*, 2

⁹³ *The Calcutta Journal*, VI (1822), 130, quoted from the *John Bull*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 458

that I desire is, that I may not be compelled to associate with the Journalist of Jerash As I may be accused of pressing too hard upon one so miserably discomfitted, I must anticipate the charge by saying I do not strike my fallen adversary, I only strive to cast away the carcass.⁹⁵

Buckingham called him "Bloodthirsty" After these slanders, "Civilis" gloated over the "impostor" "At this moment falsehood and iniquity and dark ingratitude have been brought to him with tremendous effect"

Although "Sempronius" kept up a running fire of calumny in early December, the full frontal attack did not come until Christmas, when "A Friend of Mr Bankes" returned to the charge

I have at least attempted to stem a current of licentiousness, issuing from a Press boasting to be FREE and employing its freedom *in sowing the seeds of everything disorderly and disreputable among all ranks and denominations of Englishmen in India*, insulting public authority with an effrontery, that, tolerated a little longer, cannot fail to shake it to its foundations,—and in ungratefully vilifying the grace to which its owes its liberty The Indian Public may still choose to drink from the stream, but I deem it a duty, and a service to warn society, of the poison, which it draws from a contaminated source The phenomenon of a JOURNALIST venting his sentiments without the aid of a Censor is but new in India and it was manifest that in this country, such a man might prove the instrument of incalculable evil—In looking around me, I beheld the evils, that might be feared, actually occurring I saw them insinuating themselves *into the very stronghold of our power*, and possibly paving the way for an event, which the enemies to this power have hitherto attempted in vain

Entertaining these views, THE CONDUCTOR OF SUCH A PRESS BECAME IN MY EYES A PUBLIC ENEMY,—and resting his power, as he did, as well on his CHARACTER as his *principles*, HIS REPUTATION BECAME A FAIR AND A LEGITIMATE OBJECT OF ATTACK, AND *its overthrow a subject of honest triumph to every lover of his country*⁹⁶

Except for "Verus," who, harping on the "impostor's" powers of boasting and lack of gratitude, hovered like a vulture over a field of battle, "A Friend of Mr Bankes" fired the last gun in this war on Buckingham's character He called the massive "A New Years Gift"

He is the public enemy I have denounced him, and I close my notice of him by reasserting that every lover of his Country is bound to

⁹⁵ *The Calcutta Journal*, VI (1822), 459

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 724

withstand and to reprobate him—the Government of India Most signally to punish him⁹⁷

Against this infamous attack Buckingham conducted a dignified defence He answered the first letter of “A Friend of Mr. Bankes” with an exposition of his relations with every one who had had personal dealings with him during his wanderings Since Burckhardt was dead it was futile to reply to his accusations, for Buckingham’s enemies proclaimed anything he said as slandering the dead He discounted Bankes’s charges by offering to the public a full opportunity to examine their personal correspondence In regard to Bankes as a person he said, “This is not the age in which rank alone will guarantee the purity of any man’s moral character” No doubt this assertion infuriated his Tory enemies more than ever, for the true cause of the persecution was his democratic sentiments

Of course his defence was of no avail against assailants who cared nothing for the truth of their charges, in his trials and misfortunes they merely sought situations, aspects of which they hoped to use to bring about his ruin Both he and they recognized that the real issue was his liberal ideas, particularly in regard to “the freedom of the press” After “A Friend of Mr Bankes” had justified his slanders as a means of defeating the freedom of the press, Buckingham exclaimed

Is it for these transactions, in a distant country, with men unknown and in the ordinary sense of the term friendless here? No! No! There are deeper seated causes of hatred to me than this and the passion burns stronger in the breasts of men who never heard of Bankes or Burckhardt before than in the breasts of those poor deluded Instruments whom they have pushed into the front of the battle

It is the “FREEDOM OF THE PRESS” which is the object of their hatred and scorn This is the secret cause of the murderous and death exciting irritation with which the warfare of its enemies is now carried on⁹⁸

He defied his enemies He called them “a band of moral assassins” He scorned their vile attack, which was, he scoffed, “like the Vultures of the Desert trying with their beaks to make an impression on the Pyramids.”

But the sheer baseness of the slander compelled him to appeal to the law for a public vindication, not that he had any confidence

⁹⁷ *The Calcutta Monthly Journal*, XLIII (1823), 277, copied from the *John Bull*

⁹⁸ *The Calcutta Journal*, VI (1822), 223

in the success of such an action. Early in the course of the persecution he indicated his fears in this regard, "We hope," he said, "the shield of law will extend to us also" And he queried, "Where is the advocate-general now? He, who once asked, 'Have you seen the Newspapers?'" When *John Bull* refused to divulge the name of the author of the letters signed by "A Friend of Mr Bankes," Buckingham notified the proprietors that they would be called upon to defend a libel charge. The suit was filed early in January, but delays postponed the trial until April.⁹⁹

Although Buckingham's Indian enemies clamoured for his journalistic execution, the stroke which proved fatal was not delivered by them or even in India, it was the penknife which cut Castlereagh's throat that severed his editorial head. As a result of the Tory Minister's suicide, Canning, who had been appointed successor to Hastings in India, became instead Foreign Secretary of England, and John Adam, until the selection and arrival of another appointee, ascended the state chair in the Presidency at Ft William. January 13, 1823, was a gala day in Calcutta. The salute of nineteen guns and three volleys of small-arms announced the performance of a state ceremony, after which the portraits of Clive, in the simple garb of a civilian, and of Wellesley, in the ornate robes of state, looked down from the walls of the Governor-General's chambers upon another worthy ruler of India. That evening at the installation ball in the Government House two ladies were heard to prophesy that a certain editor would not long remain in India. Thus began what Buckingham called "the reign of terror."¹⁰⁰

Buckingham was well aware of the hostility which he had now to face in the highest authority of the Government. And so were his lesser enemies, who, observing the caution and moderation with which he welcomed the new regime, taunted him with a line from Shakespeare, "High-reaching Buckingham now grown circumspect." But all his moderation was to go for nothing, for, within less than a fortnight and without having committed a single offence, he was haled before the bar of justice. Adam had revived the criminal information which Advocate-General Spankie had indicated would never be tried. The arrival of a new Chief Justice, Sir Henry Blossett, who declared a willingness to try the rule, gave every one good

⁹⁹ *The Calcutta Monthly Journal*, 1823, 274

¹⁰⁰ *The India Gazette*, January 16, 1823, *The Oriental Herald*, III (1824), 471, VIII (1826), 128

reason to believe that Buckingham would soon be in jail Conviction was all the more certain, because in such cases the selection of the jury was in the hands of the Clerk of the Crown of the Supreme Court, at this time Thomas Lewin, one of the proprietors of *John Bull* But the rigour of the Indian climate intervened to thwart the course of justice When Blossett suddenly died of fever, MacNaghten was again the only judge left in Calcutta, and, as before, he refused to try the rule ¹⁰¹

Frustrated by this turn of events Adam applied the other half of the political rule, "Punish your enemies and reward your friends" The first recipient chosen for a benefaction was undoubtedly worthy, since his services to the cause of "truth and decency" had been inestimable the Reverend Samuel James Bryce was appointed Clerk of the Stationery at a salary of six hundred pounds per annum In explaining this appointment to the Board of Directors, Adam said that Bryce was unable to attain any emolument in his profession and that the post was the only one within the gift of the Government to which he was eligible Just why the minister of the Kirk of St Andrews ought to receive any political appointment, Adam did not discuss One member of the Council, Harrington, reluctantly concurred in the appointment, looking upon Bryce's acceptance of the office as being inconsistent with the character of a clergyman As a matter of fact, on account of the press of duties, Bryce gave up the unremunerative secretaryship of a Bible Society to assume the post ¹⁰²

When the appointment was announced to Calcutta in a special Government gazette, such as a declaration of war, a proclamation of peace, or the coronation of a king, Buckingham found it impossible to withhold his comments He published them in an "extra," a full sheet and broadside

APPENDIX EXTRAORDINARY TO THE LAST GOVERNMENT GAZETTE

During the evening of Thursday, about the period at which the inhabitants of this good City of Palaces are accustomed to sit down to dinner, an APPENDIX TO THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE of the morning was issued in a separate form and coming in the shape of a GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY, was eagerly seized, even at that incon-

¹⁰¹ J S Buckingham, *op. cit.*, 1

¹⁰² *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 533, 112, J S Buckingham, *op. cit.*, 3

venient hour, in the hope of its containing some intelligence of great public importance Some, in whose bosoms this hope had been strongly excited, may, perhaps, have felt disappointment, others, we know, drew from it a fund of amusement which lasted all the remainder of the evening

The Reverend Gentleman, named below, who we perceive by the Index of that useful Publication, the Annual Directory, is a Doctor of Divinity and Moderator of the Kirk Session, and who, by the favour of the Higher Powers, now combines the offices of Parson and Clerk in the same person, has no doubt been selected for the arduous duties of his new place, from the purest motives, and the strictest possible attention to the public interests Such a clerk as is here required, to inspect and reject whatever articles may appear objectionable to him, should be a competent judge of the several articles of Pasteboard, Sealing Wax, Inkstands, Sand, Lead, Gum, Pounce, Tape, and Leather, and one would imagine that nothing short of a regular apprenticeship at Stationer's-hall would qualify a candidate for such a situation All this information, however, the Reverend Gentleman no doubt possesses in a more eminent degree than any other person who could be found to do the duties of such an office and though at first sight such information may seem to be incompatible with a Theological education, yet we know that the country abounds with surprising instances of that kind of genius which fits a man in a moment for any post to which he may be appointed

In Scotland, we believe, the duties of a Presbyterian Minister are divided between preaching on the Sabbath, and on the days of the week visiting the sick, comforting the weak-hearted, conferring with the bold, and encouraging the timid, in the several duties of their religion Some shallow persons might conceive that if a Presbyterian clergyman were to do his duty in India, he might also find abundant occupation throughout the year, in the zealous and faithful discharge of those pious duties which ought more specially to engage his devout attention. But they must be persons of very little reflection indeed, who entertain such an idea We have seen the Presbyterian flock of Calcutta take very good care of themselves for many months without a Pastor at all and even when the Shepherd was among them, he had abundant time to edit a controversial Newspaper, (long since defunct), and to take a part in all the Meetings, Festivities, Addresses, and Flatteries that were current at that time He has continued to display this eminently active if not holy disposition up to the present period, and according to the maxim "to him that hath much (to do) still more shall be given, and from him that hath nothing, even the little that he hath shall be taken away—" this Reverend Doctor, who has so often evinced the universality of his genius and talents, whether within the pale of Divinity or without it, is perhaps the very best person that could be selected, all things considered, to take care of the Foolscap, Pasteboard, Wax, Sand, Gum, Lead, Leather, and Tape of the Honourable East India Company of Merchants, and to examine

and pronounce on the quality of each, so as to see that no Drafts are given on their Treasury for Gum that won't stick, Tape short of measure, or Inkstands of base metal ¹⁰³

The article, although humorous and sarcastic, implied the full right of discussing, both publicly and critically, the acts of the Government and the public character of its members *John Bull* snorted at the challenge

We maintain openly and unequivocally that the Editor of the JOURNAL has nothing whatever to do with such appointments We maintain that the PUBLIC interests are in *no way* concerned in *any* appointments under this Government and this simply because the persons filling those offices are not the servants of the PUBLIC, but of the East India Company. *whose interests alone suffer, if their agents appoint incompetent persons* ¹⁰⁴

This was "the old Tory" doctrine of the purest brew, Buckingham answered with just as frank a statement of the contrary position

The right of commenting on the public acts of public men is founded on the same basis as the right of forming and expressing an opinion on any other subject, and as clearly belongs to man in every state of society as the faculty of speech itself, of which indeed it is but the exercise

And he enforced his observation with a curt reference to another matter before the public.

From what other source than this does JOHN BULL derive his right to comment on the public character of the Editor of the JOURNAL? The latter is not in his pay, nor is he his servant

He concluded with a pertinent reference to Bryce's position as a clergyman

"No man can serve two Masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to the one and despise the other Ye cannot serve God and Mammon . For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also "

A few discourses on this great lesson would if delivered from the pulpit of St Andrews, soon convince both the Preacher and his Hearers that higher and more exalted duties are expected from a Minister of the Gospel and the Head of a Church affecting superior purity and

¹⁰³ *The Calcutta Journal*, I (1823), 541, "Appendix Extraordinary to last Government Gazette" .

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 569, copied from the *John Bull*

heavenly-mindedness to that of England, than those of his newly assumed Clerkship ¹⁰⁵

With John Adam in the Government House, the consequences of such comment and of the advocacy of such doctrine could not long remain unrealized. In fact, without waiting for the concurrence of the Supreme Council, he revoked Buckingham's license. In the minute recording this decision he deprecated "the incorrigible spirit of detraction and defiance by which that person [so he designated Buckingham] is influenced" and asserted that Buckingham and his abettors were acting on a systematic plan, aimed to establish "an organized opposition to Government." He saw in the Bryce article a complete vindication of his view that Buckingham would never mend his ways. In regard to the extreme use of power he said, "I am using power strictly as a shield and not as a weapon of offence . . . Nor will I compromise the public Interest by sanctioning the unrestrained indulgence of a spirit which must produce the most extensive evil or permit the Government to be defied and insulted while I have the honour to hold my present office."¹⁰⁶ Somewhat later he drew up *A Statement of Facts*, for public circulation, in which he summarized Buckingham's offences, denied the existence of a "public" in India, conjured up visions of native rebellions, and declared that transmission was the only weapon by which the Government could protect its dignity and authority. Adam had the courage of his convictions, in *A Statement of Facts* he wrote, "It was incumbent on him not to shrink from the exercise of a power which he had on more than one occasion pressed the late Governor-General to use for the public good." When the matter was brought before the Council, it concurred in this decision, Sir Edward Paget, the Commander-in-Chief of the army, was particularly vehement against the expelled editor.¹⁰⁷

Four days after the publication of the *Appendix Extraordinary*, Buckingham received the notification that his license had been withdrawn. Although under the law which authorized the granting and revocation of such licenses Buckingham was allowed to remain in the country for two months after receiving the order to depart, and in spite of the fact that in the original notice the date of his departure had been set for April 15, Adam was so anxious to

¹⁰⁵ *The Calcutta Journal*, I (1823), 570

¹⁰⁶ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 533, 45, 75

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 62, 63, 97, John Adam, *op cit*, 49, 57.

rid the country of a menace that he asked Spankie to discover a legal means of compelling the offensive editor to leave at once. The Advocate-General, unable to oblige him, complained that Parliament had not contemplated such a case. Harrington, who had hesitated to vote for the resolution annulling Buckingham's license, was irritated by this vindictive policy.¹⁰⁸

Upon receiving the notice of Adam's decision, Buckingham informed his readers that instead of going to jail he was to have a sea voyage. At the same time he announced that he expected to return in the near future. In his reply to the Government, he made bare mention of the personal injury done him but uttered a challenge for the future:

I shall lose no time in directing all my exertions in another and higher quarter, to obtain for my countrymen in India that freedom and independence of mind which is not denied to the most abject individual of Indian birth, but which, while the power of banishment without trial exists, no Englishman can hope to enjoy in the performance of his public duties, or the promulgation of his opinions in this quarter of the British Empire.¹⁰⁹

His plan to establish a journal in England greatly frightened "the old Tories", as they well knew (and as they were to discover again), the evil that men do lives after them.

8 THE CALCUTTA JOURNAL SUPPRESSED

The expulsion of Buckingham profoundly stirred the Indian community. The snickering at the Bryce appointment died away, succeeded by silent indignation at Adam's action, the comedy had become a melodrama with the villain triumphant. Now a correspondent of *The Journal* bantered the reverend Clerk of the Stationery with the Biblical sentiment, "Suppose ye, that I come to give peace on Earth I tell ye nay, but rather division." Another correspondent burlesqued Adam's command, "Now, Sir, get along with you! Don't answer me a word, Sir,—ounds, Sir, get out!" At the same time, he consoled Buckingham with the assurance that henceforth he was to breathe only "that blackguard and licentious air which passes through the nostrils of mechanics." In quite another strain, *John*

¹⁰⁸ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 533, 79, 133, 137, 151, 53 Geo. III.

¹⁰⁹ *The Calcutta Journal*, I (1823), 617.

Bull showed his glee, playfully advertising shares in *The Journal* for sale by the pennyworth When the news reached England, *The Asiatic Journal* hailed with pleasure the firmness and decision of the Indian Government A second comment in the Company organ explained that the Bryce article was less offensive in itself than it was as an indication of the editor's perseverance in a line of conduct "most offensive and pregnant with danger"

In true Tory fashion Adam paid no attention to public feeling, while Buckingham, sobered at last, made ready to leave the country Outside his house hung the black sign which announced an auction, and a tinkling bell called to any who might wish to purchase some of the rich furnishings with which the interior was filled Inside, "pale and deep in thought," he watched his possessions knocked down to the highest bidder He was facing ruin And he had only one defence Under the law he had the right to bring suit against Adam for the damages that transmission might cause him to suffer ¹¹⁰ Shortly after the auction he appeared before the Supreme Court, posted a bond of twelve thousand rupees with John Palmer as security, and served notice of a suit to be brought as soon as he reached England In a last pamphlet he informed the public of the grounds of his case, "I contend against that un-English, and I would say *inhuman*, principle of making any man subject to instant ruin at the mere caprice and arbitrary pleasure of another" With this parting shot, he went on board the *Sir Edward Paget* bound for London by way of the Cape of Good Hope He was accompanied by his "small wife," who had arrived in India just in time to embark with her long absent husband In addition to *The Journal*, upon which he was depending for an income, he left behind such incidental property as a share each in a theatre and a steamboat ¹¹¹

As editor of *The Journal*, Buckingham employed a Mr Sandys, who, as an Anglo-Indian, could not be deported Two Englishmen, Sanford Arnot and James Sutherland, were to aid him They were instructed to maintain harmony among themselves and to uphold the independent reputation of the paper Each man was given the right to strike out any sentiments which he considered questionable, articles of "undue warmth" were to be guarded against A

¹¹⁰ 21 Geo III c 70

¹¹¹ *The Bengal Hurkaru*, XLIII (1823), 18, *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 533, 318, J S Buckingham, *A Few Brief Remarks on the Recent Act of Transportation with Trial with copies of the Official Correspondence Neither Published or Sold* (Calcutta, 1823), 5

balance of about twenty-seven hundred pounds was left on deposit with Alexander and Company to carry on the paper ¹¹²

A week after Buckingham's departure, Adam laid before the Supreme Court new measures for regulating the press ¹¹³ He had deliberately delayed taking this action until the expelled editor was out of the country No paper or press was to be set up without a license from the Government All licenses were to be subject to revocation without notice All illegal papers and presses were to be confiscated Every book was to carry on its last page the name and address of its publisher and printer A copy of every book, pamphlet, and paper had to be deposited with the Government Violations of these rules were to be punished by fines, imprisonment, or transmission, as the authorities might elect The regulations of 1818 remained in force as guides for the editors

When the matter of notifying Sandys of these new regulations came before the Council for discussion, Adam wished to threaten him with the exclusion of *The Journal* from the mails if he violated the rules of 1818 during the twenty days which had to elapse before the new regulations became law Harrington's refusal to agree to this proposal compelled Adam to abandon it The Council agreed, however, to threaten Sandys with summary punishment if he showed himself in the least degree recalcitrant ¹¹⁴

When Adam moved to establish the licensing system, the Council decided to permit any one who was opposed to such a measure the right to appear before the Supreme Court MacNaughten fixed the last day of March for the hearing, and Fergusson presented a petition from Ram Mohun Roy, who protested against the measure in the name of the natives He argued that the people of Calcutta generally opposed such extreme regulations, that the natives would be prevented from indicating to the Government the errors and injustices committed by its administrative officers, that every type of publication not in agreement with the Government would be suppressed, and that the new regulations were the act of a despotism which meant to preserve its power by keeping the natives in ignorance These arguments, of course, can be recognized as those which Buckingham had asserted throughout his editorial career, and, among those who filled the court room, some contended that he

¹¹² John Adam, *op. cit.*, 50, J S Buckingham, *op. cit.*, 3, *The Oriental Herald*, VIII (1826), 416.

¹¹³ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 533, 241

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 233 et seq

had written the appeal When Fergusson's eloquence stirred the crowded court room to loud applause, MacNaghten threatened to jail any one who manifested his approval in a disorderly manner

In registering the new regulations, MacNaghten ignored Roy's petition—"the Areopagitica of the Indian Press," it has been called—and reverted to a discussion of Buckingham's transmission After declaring that there was not any town, city, or place on earth enjoying "more practical liberty" than Calcutta, he went on to say

If we are to have a Free Constitution, which we have not—let a free Press follow, not precede it With respect to the transmission of Mr Buckingham, I shall offer no Opinion It is an act for which the Government alone is responsible, nor, sitting here, am I entitled to give any on the subject, but I have no right whatever to suppose that in the exercise, in their discretion, of the power vested in them by law, that they have acted wrong But since Mr Buckingham has been sent out of the country for conduct which the Government deem to be opposition to their authority, and has appointed a successor who tells us that he cannot be controlled by the Supreme Authority, but is superior to it, it is necessary that things should be brought to their proper level No Government could successfully stand against such a Press¹¹⁵

Thus lapsed the liberalism in which Hastings believed and of which Buckingham was the active protagonist Adam and his "old Tory" supporters could again sleep in peace

In spite of MacNaghten's opinion of the free press in India, he was not hostile to Buckingham This was notably evident when, three days after the registration of the new press rules, *The Bull* libels came to trial The proprietors of *The Bull* offered their case to Spankie, when he refused it they turned to a Mr Clarke, recently arrived from England, where he had been in the employ of the Constitutional Association His plea, far more laboured than any *The Hurkaru* had ever heard, was worthy of his record and his cause.

On this occasion, who am I defending? Gentlemen of the civil service —men of respectability, who have passed the ordeal of public opinion with credit, and against whom nothing could ever be insinuated —Two of them are officers of your Lordship's court Can these be the men who would wish to vilify the plaintiff? It seems that some cause must

¹¹⁵ *The Calcutta Government Gazette*, April 3, 1823.

exist for their doing so But now let us see who is this plaintiff? The Editor of *The Calcutta Journal*, who in Egypt was a suspicious man As in Egypt so he was in Bombay At length he comes to Calcutta—he enters into the speculation of the *Journal*, and at last is sent home as a disturber of the public peace¹¹⁶

He concluded by declaring that *The Bull* ought to be given the thanks of the public for having exposed such “a pestilent fellow” Fergusson again spoke for Buckingham In “an indignant burst of manly eloquence,” he defended the character of his client, “Never did a more mischievous, palpable, or damnable libel appear against any individual” And MacNaghten was of the same opinion, for in giving the verdict he described the libels as “most malicious” and declared to the open court that he could not think of them without horror Since Buckingham had not claimed special damages but had desired only to vindicate his character, the court awarded him one thousand rupees and costs¹¹⁷

Lord Amherst assumed the Governor-Generalship at the beginning of August, but no change took place in the Government’s attitude toward the press With the approval of the Board of Directors, which had gone on record in favour of the restoration of the censorship in January before Buckingham was expelled, he accepted Adam’s new regulations He became, in fact, a tool of “the old Tories”¹¹⁸

But peace did not come to the newspaper world In the course of the year following the promulgation of the new rules, each of the three dailies—*The Bull*, *The Hurkaru*, and *The Scotsman*—threatened the others with prosecutions, two military duels were fought as a result of letters printed in the papers, and no less than five such encounters were engaged in by the editors In one of these the brother-in-law of Bryce shot the editor of *The Hurkaru*, but not fatally When Buckingham received the news of these affairs, he observed that if it had not been for Bryce’s black coat the number of duels might have been much greater As it was, Bryce escaped with no more serious injury than being condemned for unchristian conduct In fact during the disturbance he collected two thousand rupees from *The Journal*, which published an article stating that rumour had designated him as the author of the letters signed by

¹¹⁶ *The Bengal Hurkaru*, XLIII (1823), 271.

¹¹⁷ *The Calcutta Journal*, II (1823), 639

¹¹⁸ *The Asiatic Journal*, XVIII (1824), 188

"A Friend of Mr Bankes"¹¹⁹ Inasmuch as his attorney had asked for twenty thousand rupees, the verdict was no great vindication of character for such a notable divine

The Government attempted to quiet these disorders by making more regulations. Early in 1824 the editors were forbidden to print any materials that might tend to renew the discussions of the freedom of the press. They were also ordered not to publish the debates in the Court of the Proprietors or Parliament. These prohibitions were meant to prevent reports of Buckingham's activities in England from reaching the Indian public. Even *John Bull* was censured for reprinting extracts from Buckingham's new paper, *The Oriental Herald*.¹²⁰

Not a month had passed after Amherst's arrival before he put his power against *The Journal*. That article which was the basis of Bryce's successful libel suit also aroused the anger of the Government. Since Sandys, the Anglo-Indian editor, could not be punished, another victim had to be found, and Arnot, who was living in India without a license, was selected for transmission. When delays in delivering to him a copy of the order to depart prevented him from posting the necessary security for leaving the country, he was arrested, locked in a military prison, and held for immediate deportation. Arnot secured his release by a writ of *habeas corpus*, issued by MacNaghten, and fled to the French post of Chandernagore. But neither a court order nor a foreign sovereignty could protect him from the Government's wrath. In spite of the French authorities, he was seized and sent on board the first ship to clear the river. It was *The Fame*, bound for Ben Coolen (now Singapore), a most unhealthy spot. Worse misfortune awaited him there, for the boat caught fire and was burned. He was then put on another vessel and returned to Calcutta, where he was transferred to a ship which finally carried him to England. Notwithstanding his possession of sufficient funds, drawn from Buckingham's account, to pay his way and the offers of three captains to give him a free passage, he was forced to endure the hardship of a charter berth. For nearly six months he lived on scraps from the captain's table.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ *The Asiatic Journal*, XXI (1826), 132, 234. *The Oriental Herald*, IX (1826), 34.

¹²⁰ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 533, 603, 624 *et seq.*

¹²¹ *Parliamentary Papers*, XL (1836), 4, 10, 29, F Dawtrey Drewitt, *op. cit.*, 104, Leicester Stanhope, *op. cit.*, 9, *The Oriental Herald*, I (1824), 637, II (1824), 231.

The vindictive spirit which harried Arnot out of the country quickly worked the complete destruction of *The Journal*. Shortly before Arnot was seized, the Government forbade the opening of a circulating library made up of Buckingham's books and to which he proposed sending new works from England. In October (the order prohibiting the discussion of the freedom of the press had not yet been issued) *The Journal* published some extracts from one of these new books, Stanhope's *Sketch of the History and Influence of The Press in British India*. For this and an article which condemned the export of females to Arabia in exchange for eunuchs, *The Journal's* license was revoked. The Government then notified John Palmer, the chief proprietor with Buckingham, that as long as the latter retained any financial interest in the paper a new license would not be issued. Palmer replied by suggesting that the name of the paper be changed to *The British Lion* and a Dr Munston, a son-in-law of Harrington and Secretary to the Medical Board, be appointed as editor. Delays in issuing the license for this paper dissipated the funds of *The Journal*, for the entire staff was kept on the pay-roll awaiting the Government's action. By January, 1824, nothing remained of the property but the press, the type, a little paper, and some ink. *The Hurkaru*, now edited by Dr Abel, Lord Amherst's personal physician, had taken over *The Journal's* subscribers, the Government proposed putting the paper into his hands, but the civil servants supported Munston.¹²²

At this stage in the negotiations the Government notified Palmer that no license would be issued to the Columbia press as long as Buckingham was connected with it. When Munston was not allowed to lease the press, an agreement was reached which transferred the property to him, he then moved into Buckingham's house and printing establishment, operated the deported editor's equipment, and drew a salary of one thousand pounds. This salary and any loss resulting from his operations were guaranteed by the proprietors of *The Journal*. And there was a loss. Buckingham did not receive a penny from this transaction, not even a copy of the new paper, *The Scotsman in the East*. Amherst had objected to the name, *The British Lion*. Thus the Government forced the transfer of the property to the son-in-law of one of its leading members and

¹²² *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 533, 385 *et seq.*, 529, *The Oriental Herald*, II (1824), 92, III (1824), 50, VII (1825), 575, *The Asiatic Journal*, XVIII (1824), 188.

justified the act on the grounds that no other arrangement would permanently remove the feared editor's influence from India ¹²³

In pursuing this harsh policy the Bengal Government had the active sympathy, if not the actual support, of its home superiors. On the day that Buckingham embarked (which was months before the news of his transmission reached England) Liverpool, the Premier, Canning, the Foreign Secretary, and Wynn, the President of the Board of Control, drew up a minute deprecating "the growing abuse of a licentious press" in India. They agreed that no new governmental powers were necessary, transmission was the "ultimate foundation" of the enforcement of the press rules, which, in their opinion, could be better determined in India than in England. Four days later the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors went on record in favour of any measure which Amherst might take against the newspapers. And three months later the Directors, calling Wynn's attention to the controversies which were raging in the four native papers, pleaded for some new measure to control the press and referred to their previous recommendation for the restoration of the censorship. The Board of Control replied with the declaration that the censorship was inapplicable to India ¹²⁴.

With Munston set up as editor of *The Scotsman in the East*, "the old Tory" war on the freedom of the press was over. Adam had successfully upheld the character, dignity, and pre-eminence of the Governor-General. When the Directors learned of Buckingham's expulsion, they approved of the act and notified Adam of their "strenuous and cordial support." But his other measures were not found so praiseworthy. The addition of four regiments to the native army was severely censured. And no sooner did the Directors receive word of the Bryce appointment than they attacked it as "grossly improper" and ordered it annulled immediately. The Board of Control concurred in this order. Adam's explanation of the appointment was condemned as entirely unsatisfactory. They also objected to Munston's acting as editor of a newspaper while he had medical duties to perform. Munston then sold the goodwill

¹²³ *Authentic Statement, accompanied by various Public and Private letters recently obtained from India, proving the forcible Transfer and Ultimate Destruction of the Property of Mr Buckingham, Late Editor and Proprietor of the Late Calcutta Journal (Printed for the use of the Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Co only, and not yet published, or sold), 1-7, The Oriental Herald, IX (1826), 614, Home Miscellaneous Series, Vol 533, 394*

¹²⁴ *Report from the Select Committee 1834, appendix, 101*

of *The Scotsman* for a large consideration Bryce also fared badly at the hands of his superiors the Scottish Kirk rebuked him for accepting the secretaryship and ordered him to resign or suffer the humiliation of being unfrocked Bryce obeyed—only to become the sole proprietor of *The Bull*¹²⁵

The hunt to the death had ended, and it was time to regild the cock of St Andrews

¹²⁵ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 534, 41, 42a, Vol 533, 589, *Bengal Dispatches*, Vol 96, 97, *Report from the Select Committee* 1834, 13, *The Oriental Herald*, XI (1826), 634

CHAPTER IV

LORD HUM

I. EARLY POLITICAL OPINIONS

INDIAN or English, all Tories looked alike to Buckingham, he wasted no love on either them or their actions. Since his youth when he had read John Hunt's *Examiner*, his political sympathies had been with the Whigs, and after he reached manhood the course of events under Tory administrations had served only to strengthen his early convictions. Fox was "an immortal statesman," but such contemporary ministers as Lord Liverpool and his colleagues were the most contemptible body of officeholders that had ever misgoverned a nation. Whatever support they received from the people Buckingham explained as a matter of prudence. He admired the people for their patience.

Early in 1819 he published his first formal pronouncement upon English politics, a field of action which was to hold his interest in one way or another for the remainder of his life. In "A calm and impartial survey of the state of political parties in England,"¹ he condemned both the Tories and the Radicals—the former for their violence, extravagance, and opposition to all reforms, the latter because they were undermining the confidence of the country in the Whigs, who "were a formidable association in behalf of the principles of civil and religious liberty and liberal, enlightened, and patriotic policy." The master principles of this policy were economy and reform in all branches of the government both at home and abroad. As the first measures necessary for the relief of the country, he advocated parliamentary reform—"in a moderate and wholesome degree"—and Catholic emancipation.

The later years of his Indian residence showed a shift of opinion away from Whiggism. This development was stimulated partly by the repressive policy of the Tories but more by the failure of the Whigs to maintain consistent attitudes toward the leading reform issues. In 1821 when corruption in the election raised the issue of parliamentary representation, he urged "the propertied reformers"

¹ *The Calcutta Journal*, II (1819), 567, 580.

to offer a specific plan for the removal of the abuses and implied that their failure to bring forward such a measure would lead inevitably to extreme demands from "the property-less masses" At the same time, in continuing his support of Catholic emancipation, he attacked the Anglican establishment, characterizing it as "a most galling imposition upon the people"

More noteworthy, however, than these manifestations of Radicalism, was his discovery of the problems of labour and the poor He did not permit himself dogmatic opinions upon either problem, but he saw that only by dealing with them could the real causes of public calamity and discontent be removed He argued that labour was not a commodity He dared to think that labourers ought to be paid enough to support their families and to gain independence He sharply condemned those capitalists who penalized their employees for participating in political agitations Although his remedies for economic distress were the Radical devices of lowering taxes, reducing armaments, and abolishing sinecures, he was aware of other proposals, particularly those which Robert Owen had applied at New Lanark ²

Shortly after his arrival in London he undertook a tour of the country His first purpose was to find out what interest existed in regard to India, his second was to ascertain the general condition of England He soon discovered that the English, although curious about their distant Indian empire, were amazingly ignorant of its essential features To their minds India was a long way off, hot beyond endurance, infested everywhere with man-eating tigers, and inhabited by a barbarous and immoral people, above all they knew it as a place where fortunes could be made easily and quickly if one escaped cholera morbus and liver complaint As for England, he easily verified the existence of the misery and discontent which he had read about in the news dispatches that had reached him in Calcutta Now those opinions of English life which had germinated in India were transplanted to their native habitat where they were to feed on its soil and bear fruit ripened in its atmosphere At the same time he brought to his countrymen new ideas about Indian administration in particular and colonial policy in general

² *The Calcutta Journal*, I (1820), 193, II (1820), 240, III (1820), 677, IV (1820), 185, 583, VI (1821), 449.

2 THE ENGLISH SCENE IN 1823

In the same week that the *Sir Edward Paget* carried Buckingham into the waters of his native Cornwall, the Commons heard four of its most eminent members debate the policy of suppressing opinions. Joseph Hume, that carping Scot who, according to reports, had made money in India faster than it had ever been made before, began the argument by bringing in a petition which protested against the policy of jailing persons who attacked Christianity. To his Tory audience Hume cited facts which no reactionary of any time or stripe could relish. He told them how Hone had sold twenty thousand of his *Parodies* following the successful legal joust with Lord Ellenborough, how Southey's youthful lapse into Radicalism, the poem *Watt Tyler*, had found thirty thousand purchasers since its father had sought to deny his offspring, and how the demand for Tom Paine's works had jumped from two thousand to fifteen thousand copies in two weeks after Carlile, who had dared to republish *The Age of Reason*, had been convicted of blasphemy. Ricardo supported Hume in advocating "the unfettered liberty of discussion."

But the opposition was as eminent, if not as eloquent, and much nearer to the seats of the mighty. The very humane Wilberforce defended the Constitutional Association and the Society for the Suppression of Vice for their patriotic labours in saving the country from those who grossly and vulgarly abused the religion of the state. He felt only horror for Carlile. Had not the atheist vaunted his opinions to the world by raising above his Fleet Street shop the sign, "The Temple of Reason. This is the mart of sedition and blasphemy"? Sir Robert Peel, speaking for the Ministry, agreed with Wilberforce and informed the House that he would not consent to allow men who were endeavouring to undermine the religion of the country to go unpunished. And as Home Secretary he made good his word, between 1821 and 1824 no less than one hundred and fifty persons were sent to jail for having acted as Carlile's agents.

It was "old England"—the England of the eighteenth century and his boyhood—to which the sailor-adventurer-editor returned. But now the aristocratic regime stood exposed in all its ugliness. "old England" had become "unreformed England." Why, it was asked, should an oligarchy of 400 members monopolize the political power of the country? Why should 100 boroughs whose total population was less than 185,000 souls send 200 members to the national

legislature, when Manchester with its 187,000 sent not even one? And a chorus of protests arose against the exclusion of Catholics from political life.

These inequalities in the representation were made more burdensome by the corruption which permeated every branch of the political system. The sinecures were an open scandal. Placemen were notorious. Elections were riotous and farcical. The police were a joke. The courts were either too slow or too swift to render impartial justice. Above all the law was viciously cruel. Those unfortunates who escaped the gallows were transported, flogged, or imprisoned in jails where filth and disease wrought the work of the executioner. In addition to all these evils, which were normal to those institutions described by the *Annual Register* as "orderly, durable, and free," many of the recent measures which had suppressed the liberties of the people in the name of the safety of the state still remained in force. Only the juries—the single institution over which the people had any control—served to mitigate the abuses, from time to time they refused to convict defendants for whose crime the punishment seemed too severe.

The gossiply Whig, Creevey, described the stakes which this political system protected. Snatches from his diary leave little doubt as to the spice of life for the rich and powerful in the early 'twenties

. 780 head of game were killed by 10 guns We all dined at Knowsley last night. The new dining room is opened it is 53 feet by 37, and such a height that it destroys the effects of all the other apartments there were 36 wax candles over the table, 14 on it, and ten great lamps on tall pedestals about the room Thanet has won £40,000 in one night at Paris He broke the bank at the Salon twice

I had really a charming day at Roehampton yesterday. It is quite a superb villa or house, with 500 acres of beautiful ground about it the ladies and I ride for 3 hours or so Wedine at $\frac{1}{2}$ past seven, and the critics would say not badly We drink in great moderation—walk out, all of us, before tea, and then crack jokes and *fiddle* till about $\frac{1}{2}$ past 12 or 1 In one of these [boxes] he is said to have found 20 locks of hair, with a label on each, containing the name of the lover to whom it belonged In talking with Lady Derby about young Gill Heathcote's duel, she put me in mind that young Gill and Mrs. Johnson are cousins The principal *novelty* to Sir B— is a child which the lady has born to P— It is the conduct of P— to this interesting infant which constitutes the lady's grounds for abandoning him forever It seems the child had suffered severely in cutting a tooth—an event which agitated its mother extremely, but which

P—— is alleged to have witnessed with the most stoical indifference George Payne's loss (in bets) turns out to be £21,000 and not £25,000 as I had been told Poor Mrs Carnac had a regular haystack of diamonds last night Such a dumpy, rum-shaped, rum-faced article as Lady Londonderry one can rarely see A stable brilliantly illuminated containing ninety horses worth 50 or 60 guineas a piece upon an average, is a sight to be seen nowhere but in this "tight little isle "³

Political power was not for its own sake, nor for the sake of those delightful intellectual brawls in St Stephens. As the Tories well knew, power was to protect the aristocratic economic and social monopoly Indeed, at the same time they suppressed the popular clamour against the political abuses, they intensified the people's misery by legislation which served their own economic interests The Corn Law was meant to protect the price of their grain The enclosure acts added acres to their estates More land was enclosed in the decade which ended in the year of Peterloo than in any similar period between 1700 and 1850 And the lucrative positions in the army, the navy, the colonial administration, and the church, as well as the opportunities for education, particularly in the universities—

All obsolete ante-diluvian things—
Passive obedience, right divine of kings—
Driv'n back and back have still in college-cell
Their last stronghold and citadel ⁴

were for the genteel and noble. Only one sop—the poor law—was thrown to the masses, who, more and more, were finding that its bare grants were the limits of their sustenance In some parts of the country it was not an unknown practice to put the peasantry up for sale At Harrow, a single man generally fetched five shillings a week, a married man with a wife brought seven shillings, for a married man with a family a somewhat higher price was given Usually they were resold each week.⁵ It was a good thing for England that all her sons and daughters were not as tender as the renowned Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel, who was known to have fainted when he pinched his finger in a door

³ Sir Herbert Maxwell, ed., *The Creevey Papers* (2 vols., Portsmouth, 1903), II, 52 *et seq.*

⁴ James Shergold Boone, *Men and Things in 1823* (London, 1823), 34

⁵ *Parliamentary Debates*, XVIII (1823), 958

Repression saved the aristocratic regime, but the march of the machine went on. In 1817 Robert Owen estimated that England's mechanical power exceeded the man-power of eighty million workers. And the decade of the 'twenties was a time of "wonders and discoveries" on every hand. Improved saucepan handles, alarm clocks, and iron bedsteads vied with more important industrial inventions, even the current crime wave brought its addition to the wonders of the day in the shape of a coffin designed to frustrate the best efforts of the "resurrectionists," who plied a steady trade in cadavers with medical students. Thus Manchester became "Cottonopolis," and Sheffield, surrounded with blast furnaces, was ringed, as Cobbett said, "in the horrible splendour of their everlasting fire."

Although the mechanization of industry broke, to some degree, the isolation usual in the life of common men in the traditional society, the complete disruption of that social milieu, which formed the bulwark of the aristocratic monopoly because it trained the "lower orders" to habits and attitudes of subservience, was made inevitable by the revolution in transportation and communication. Of this revolution the 1820's saw the practical beginnings. By 1829 parliamentary speeches were read as far as one hundred miles from Westminster on the morning after their delivery, couriers brought news from Paris in twenty-four hours, and reports of prize fights travelled at the unprecedented speed of twenty miles an hour. Both coastwise and cross-Channel steamship lines were established by 1825, the year in which the *Enterprise* definitely demonstrated the seaworthiness of the steamship by a voyage from London to Calcutta. What the development of steam navigation meant in terms of multiplied social contacts can be readily appreciated when it is recalled that the first steamship to make a scheduled voyage from Edinburgh to London carried more passengers than all the sailing vessels in that service. The railroad was to be even more revolutionary. Before the building of the Liverpool-Manchester railway, the number of persons travelling between the two cities by stage was about five hundred daily, immediately after its opening an average of sixteen hundred passengers made the journey each day by train.

The most apparent social effect of these industrial changes was the concentration of the population in "the great Towns." During the 'twenties these agglomerations showed increases ranging from forty to one hundred per cent, while the rate for the country as a whole was only fourteen per cent. London shared in this growth, as did also

Glasgow, but the new community revealed its typical and enduring characteristics chiefly in the industrial regions

Living conditions, except for the endemic diseases which festered in the crowded and filthy quarters, were only a little worse for the denizens of these "new towns" than they were for the inhabitants of the old villages. Did not *The Quarterly Review* congratulate itself and ask for two centuries more life for the aristocratic regime on the ground that by 1825 the dirt floors of rural cottages had become paved with stone and that stairs were being built to their second-floor chambers? During the 'twenties vegetation still existed in the new towns, and the pall of smoke had not yet become their permanent shrouds. At the same time the moderately wealthy merchants and shop-masters began to move into "suburbs." Thus the working class was left alone in the dismal wilderness of narrow streets, open sewers, factory-sheds, dram-shops, cellars, and smoke—the "slum" and "the fever district," along with "the industrial proletariat," were new phenomena. The planlessness of the towns and their mushroom growth intensified the distress of their inhabitants, but the distress itself had other origins—the traditional order, which condemned the masses to inferiority (even Brougham and Cobbett agreed that the diet of the poor could never consist of other foods than bread, meat, and beer), and more, the competitive economic system which sacrificed everything to gain Carlyle's "Old Hidebound Toryism" and "Mammon" were the evil monsters that made the city horrible.

On its own part, however, the industrial city was a new social milieu in which common men were to be trained to a sense of their capacity, worth, and power. The revolution which occurred in industry was accompanied by an evolution of the internal life of those cities which housed the industry.

Eighteenth-century Liverpool possessed three charities—a Blue Coat Hospital, a Seaman's Hospital, and an infirmary, the nineteenth-century city had eight such institutions—two dispensaries, a school for the indigent blind, a house of recovery, a lunatic asylum, an ophthalmic clinic, a female penitentiary, and a workhouse. In addition there were several new charitable societies, such as the Stranger's Friends Society and the Ladies' Charity for the relief of poor women in childbed.

No less remarkable was the development of the means of intellectual life. In 1761 there was one library or rather a room with a few books, in 1821 there were two libraries, the Athenaeum and the

Lyceum, and such new establishments as the Union News Room, the Underwriter's Room, the Liverpool Royal Institution, where casts of the Elgin Marbles could be seen, and a Botanical Garden. The single newspaper of 1761 had grown into four political sheets, two commercial papers, and three literary journals. Moreover, the larger outlook on the world, which was being created by the growth of trade, brought the organization of a Society of Travellers into Foreign Countries. Even more important for the common people than these developments was the founding of the Sunday Schools, which in 1821 enrolled over eleven thousand students.

Quite as interesting as these changes was the appearance of new forms of amusements. By 1821 the one theatre of the eighteenth century had been rebuilt to meet the competition of the Music Hall, the Olympic Circus, and the Wellington Rooms, where public dances—"assemblies," they were called—were held.

New economic services had also arisen. The first stage coach rolled in from London in 1761, by 1821 there were lines radiating from the city in all directions. The London mail arrived regularly at three o'clock each morning. The northern post came in two hours later. In 1761 two sailing packets operated between Liverpool and Ireland and the Isle of Man, sixty years later there were five steam packets in the Dublin service alone, three more to the Isle of Man, one to the Bristol Channel, and eight on the Mersey River. There were eight packets sailing weekly to Ireland and four each month for New York. The old town had only one market place, but the new city possessed five markets, one a fine covered building, two water companies, and a gas works.

All the great towns shared in these developments—by 1832 Manchester had thirty literary, scientific, and philanthropic institutions—but, if one can believe a Birmingham rhymster of 1828, the changes did not enhance their beauty.

But what's more melancholy still,
For poor old Brummagem,
They've taken away all Newhall-hill,
Poor old Brummagem!
At Easter time, girls fair and brown,
Used to come rolly-polly down,
And showed their legs to half the town,
Oh! the good old sights in Brummagem

I remember one John Growse,
 A buckle-maker in Brummagem
 He built himself a country house,
 To be out of the smoke of Brummagem
 But though John's country house stands still,
 The town itself has walked uphill,
 Now he lives beside of a smoky mill,
 In the middle of the streets of Brummagem ⁶

And all the towns alike displayed the tendencies which were to shape industrial civilization. The use of gas for lighting gave their streets a new aspect and reacted upon the commercial and social life of their people. In earlier times there had been no night-trading, shutters barred the windows as soon as darkness came, and the streets were deserted except by the daring or foolhardy. But in the 'twenties the shopkeepers took down their blinds and lighted the windows to display wares whose qualities were made more resplendent by reflecting mirrors and bright chandeliers, at the same time the clerks began to complain on account of the late hours the masters kept the shops open. Nor should the new attractiveness of the public-houses be overlooked. At night their gaudily painted fronts became more brilliant than ever under the glare of the flickering flames. The 'twenties added one unique institution to the life of the new towns, the Mechanics' Institute. Although originally founded in Glasgow, it took on a mature form in London and then spread rapidly, after 1823, throughout the industrialized area of the country. These institutes were the first venture in the great field of adult education.

Far away, indeed, were the denizens of these great towns from the rural villages where "the methody meeting" and the blacksmith shop were the rival centres of intellectual influence. The worker in any of the new industrial cities was more open to the play of ideas and opinions than common men had ever been before, and in the final analysis it was this new milieu which generated the great English revolution of the nineteenth century, namely, that expansion of public opinion whose power forced the passing of the reform bills, broke the landlord's economic monopoly, and inaugurated measures of social amelioration almost endless in variety.

"The old Tories" recognized the new danger. In supporting the bill to suppress seditious meetings, Lord Ellenborough declared, "The progress of education and the influence of the press has brought

⁶ James Dobbs, "I Cant Find Brummagem," quoted in J. A. Langford, *A Century of Birmingham Life* (Birmingham, 1868), II, 525.

public opinion more in contact with government than before" Two years later the growth of the great towns was openly argued as a reason for maintaining a peace-time army five times as great as that of the late eighteenth century If public opinion grew with the cities, it drew its life from the popular press This "the old Tories" also knew, in 1819 Lord Eldon complained

When he was in office, he never heard of waggons filled with seditious papers, in order to be distributed through every village, to be introduced into cottages Such things were formerly unknown, but there was now scarcely a village in the kingdom that had not its little shop in which nothing was sold but blasphemy and sedition⁷

The noble lord was even more specific about the quality of the opinions distributed, they were, he said, "seditious blasphemy" and "blasphemous sedition"

Between 1770 and 1829, as an eminent English historian has pointed out, public opinion was given an effective organization⁸ And if one recalls those first men in English public life who spoke for the masses, one quickly discovers that they appeared between these dates As one names them—Spence, Cobbett, Owen, "Orator" Hunt, Leigh Hunt, Wooler, Place, Carlile, Hetherington, O'Brien, Buckingham—all take their place either as the product of the great towns or as members of "the fourth estate" Since the conflict over the freedom of the press in the 1790's, the multiplication of newspapers had been extraordinary In 1801 the stamp tax was paid on sixteen million issues, in 1821 the tax was paid on twenty-five million But by the later date, after Cobbett had revived his *Political Register*, which sold, he boasted, to the number of a million copies in six weeks, the unstamped papers had become quite as important as the legal publications In 1829, according to *The Westminster Review*, there were 308 newspapers in the United Kingdom, 219 in England and Wales, and 13 were dailies But the rise of periodicals was even more remarkable Buckingham described them as flowing over England as the Nile flowed over Egypt, and not the least among the flood were his own *Oriental Herald*, *Sphynx*, and *Athenaeum* As a continental traveller observed, publicity had become a matter of common right

⁷ *Parliamentary Debates*, XLI (1819), 1589

⁸ J R Seeley, "The English Revolution of the Nineteenth Century," *MacMillan's Magazine*, XXII (1870), 248

At the same time the pursuit of knowledge became a passion among the more actively minded people of the towns. Just as they read newspapers and periodicals so also did they read books. By 1821 there were nine hundred circulating libraries and two thousand book clubs in the country. Hardly less important than these instructors of opinion were lectures, no end of which can be found advertised in the news columns of the day. The year 1823 saw the first attempt to carry on a nation-wide agitation from the platform.

In this wider play of opinions not only were the interests of the aristocracy to be attacked, but also they were to be merged in new interests and engaged in a fiercer conflict. For now, in addition to the commercial class of the older towns, there had grown up between the orders of the traditional society the social groups of the industrial towns, the capitalists, "enduring, sturdy, square-set," and the urban workers, "the helots of luxury" Shelley called them. Moreover, the general application of capitalism in land and agriculture had wiped out all but the vestiges of the old communal system, so that the new social structure belonged almost as much to the country as it did to the towns. Even the Tory *Quarterly Review* declared that the middle class was "the peculiar and happy characteristic" of the kingdom and described its members as "the chief depositaries of the piety, the virtue, the knowledge, the industry, the independence, the valour, and the patriotism, which have produced, under the blessing of heaven, a degree of happiness unknown to the same extent in any other country in the world." And one ought to remember that the stable of fine horses, which, as Creevey remarked, could be seen nowhere else except in "this tight little isle," belonged to a rich brewer.

The capitalist was pious and virtuous—in 1823 John Bright's father had only one child under nine years old in his cotton mill—but he was also a speculator.

Our sires, poor unambitious folks!
Had but an individual hoax,
A simple South-Sea bubble,
Each province *our* delusion shares,
From Poyais down to Buenos-Ayres—
To count them is a trouble ⁹

The year 1825 brought a fever of speculation, with John Wilkes, Jr., as the leading promoter. The remainder of the decade witnessed the

⁹ *The New Monthly Magazine*, XI (1824), 310.

application of joint-stock organization in mining, gas-making, railroad promotion, and insurance

The capitalist made a virtue of living up to his bargain, but his primary virtue was driving a hard one. On one hand he exploited his employees, and on the other he despised them for complaining at their lot. His only rule for success was self-interest, realized without regard to social consequences. But few were as brutally frank in their views as the Manchester magnate who condemned his weavers for their extravagance, "The sons of bitches had eaten up all the stinging nettles for ten miles around Manchester and now they had no greens for their broth."¹⁰ And not many of the poor were as dramatic in their protest as that Birmingham worker who declared, as he threw himself under the hoofs of the soldiers' horses, that he was starving and they might as well trample him to death.¹¹ Between these exaggerated extremes ranged all the social virtues and vices attending the practice of economic liberty under machine technology. Certainly for industrial capitalism, the bud was on the stalk.

But other stalks also showed blossoms. Those shoots of reform which had been held back by chilling repression were now luxuriating—along with many even ranker growths—in the hot-house of urban life. A rhymster of 1823 described the scene:

I see—and at the sight ev'n fancy faints—
Alarmists, Anarchists, Blasphemers, Saints,

* * * *

Reformers, Tories,—Whigs, ambitious brood,
Nor by themselves, nor others understood!

* * * *

Then comes the mingled mass of themes, that gain
The crowd's light ear, and fire a lady's brain
Such themes as most delight the town-bred Muse,

* * * *

Who sets the fashions, who is married—dead
Who, ruin'd, sent a bullet through his head,

* * * *

How mighty Foscolo, red whisker'd man,
Gives wondrous lectures on a wondrous plan¹²

¹⁰ *British Museum Add. MSS., 27837, f 179*, also quoted in G. Wallas, *Life of Place* (Rev. ed., London, 1918), 141.

¹¹ *The London Examiner*, April 30, 1826.

¹² James Shergold Boone, *op. cit.*, 3.

Not all the wonders of the age were triumphs of technology like the administering of medicine by steam or rare visions like the sight of John Knox's ghost, garbed in a top-hat and a Lord Byron collar, walking in Bond Street. There were many mighty Foscolos and plans even more numerous and wonderful—plans which offered society the pot of gold and the rainbow, too, without any effort except the performance of duties, the liberation of reason, or the exercise of mercy, and these, certainly, were light labour for an age of wonders.

By 1823 the lines of battle between the old order and the forces of reform had been drawn. There were to be no more repressive laws, the offensive had passed to the reformers, and they were ready for the attack. In 1820 the London merchants petitioned for free trade. A year later the Commons deprived the borough of Grampound in Cornwall of its parliamentary franchise. By placing Baltic timber on an equal footing with the Canadian product, the Commons wrought the first important modification of the mercantile system, the succeeding session brought the opening alteration in the navigation acts, the repeal of a clause requiring that all goods imported into England should be carried in English-owned ships, manned by crews three-fourths of whom should be English mariners.

These skirmishes were preliminary to a general frontal attack, and a glance at the legislative activity of 1823 reveals the full battle line. Lord John Russell followed up the disfranchisement of Grampound with two proposals, a resolution in favour of parliamentary reform and a motion for a select committee on the representation. Both failed. On the other hand, those who supported free trade principles carried the reciprocity duties bill. The Commons also passed acts encouraging the building of warehouses and limiting the number of apprentices on merchant ships. Another act, legalizing collective bargaining but denying the right to strike, compromised with the problem of the nascent labour organizations. The bill which removed the death penalty for thefts under five shillings began the humanizing of the criminal code.

But the most important reform measures carried in the Commons were given short shrift in the Lords. The Roman Catholic Elective Bill failed on the first reading. Perhaps even more significant was the fate of the bill repealing the Spitalfields Acts, which regulated London's silk industry. The chief complaint against these acts was that they gave the local magistrates the power to fix wages. Largely

through the influence of "the old Tories," the Lords restored the power to the magistrates

All in all the year 1823 was important not for the passage but for the proposal of reform measures Select committees on foreign trade and the game laws were appointed, but efforts to secure the investigation of the malt and beer taxes, delays in chancery court, and private madhouses, besides Russell's motion for a committee on parliamentary reform, failed Attempts to amend the debtor laws, to lower the house and window taxes, and to repeal the beer duties suffered a similar fate Of the resolutions proposing legislative action, only one, that asking for the establishment of courts for the collection of small debts, was passed Among the others, those for the removal of capital punishment for some fifteen offences and for parliamentary reform were beaten, while those for the abolition of slavery, the prohibition of the deportation of paupers, and the repression of discussion were withdrawn Leave to bring in bills to abolish flogging and bull-baiting was refused

Two petitions against the use of machinery called out the orthodox attitude toward industrialism Speaking on a petition from the Manchester weavers, Huskisson declared that, although he sympathized with their distresses, he was convinced that nothing could be done for them The tender Peel argued that, considering the price of provisions, the weavers could live in comfort on their current wages When Thomas Attwood, the Radical Birmingham banker, introduced a similar petition from Stockport, he took occasion to scold the weavers for asserting that their misery was in part due to the hardness of heart of their employers Other speakers urged that the cheapness of food-stuffs and the higher wages earned by machine-tenders were evidence that misery did not exist among the workers Thus, firm against political, commercial, even humanitarian reform, the Parliament of 1823 was almost completely blind to the problem of the new industrial order

But in spite of the obstacles to reform—the ignorance of the people, the vested interests of the wealthy and noble, the inertia of the Church, the schools, the courts, and the government, and the panicky fear which benumbed the upper classes—England of 1823 was definitely on the side of change indeed the spirit of the times was very modern Plans for building subways under London's streets were being discussed as practical undertakings At Vauxhall the slices of ham in the sandwiches were so thin that a newspaper could

be read through them. The current treatment for delirium tremens was sixty drops of laudanum every three hours. With ladies visiting different doctors for the ailments of each organ, one for the lungs, another for the stomach, and still another for the heart, the specialist was coming into his own. Macaulay was envisioning a Prince of Wales tutoring at the University of Timbuctoo. Metropolitan newspapers, as Buckingham complained, acquired an extensive circulation by pandering to the public's depraved tastes for the details of prize-fights, drunken quarrels, cases of rape and seduction, and the latest crimes of violence. That new race of men, travelling salesmen—among whom was one Richard Cobden—conceited and superficially informed from reading newspapers, was overrunning the country. Women talked on everything and, if young and pretty, were listened to. And most Englishmen believed that anything could be most quickly effected by means of legislation.

3 BUCKINGHAM'S CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION

As soon as Buckingham returned from the tour of the country, he made good the Calcutta threat to appeal his case to the higher authorities at home, before taking this action, he sought the advice of Hume, who, in turn, consulted with Place. In making an application to the Court of Directors of the Company for a new license to reside in India, the editor pointed out that he had been "grievously punished for a slight offence" and argued that the Supreme Court in Bengal had ample power to protect the Government against dangers his presence in India might cause. Although he prefaced his request with the declaration that he had delayed it until the Court of Directors had received the details of his case from India, *The Asiatic Journal* accused him of attempting to excite the public in his favour by bringing forward the application when news was scarce. Needless to say, the Court of Directors found no reason to interfere with the action of the Bengal authorities and refused to grant a new license. A similar petition to the Board of Control was likewise refused.¹³

Buckingham then turned to another of those several bodies which had authority over India. He petitioned the Privy Council to abrogate the Adam regulations on the ground that they were repugnant to

¹³ India Office Records, Home Miscellaneous Series, Vol 534, 3, 7, *The Asiatic Journal*, XVI (1823), 319, British Museum Add. MSS., 37949, f 130.

the laws of the realm. He argued that the regulations caused discontent in India by subjecting the natives, as well as the English, to arbitrary punishments. In emphasizing Judge MacNaghten's refusal to register the regulations until the Government had promised to license all existing papers, he pointed out that the rules endangered private property. The petition also asserted that there was no authority in either common or statute law for the imposition of licenses on printers.¹⁴

Among those representing the Company before the Privy Council, the leading figure was his old antagonist, Spankie, fresh from his career as Advocate-General in Calcutta. He was able to paint in high colours the situation which Adam had faced.

The government was attacked, its measures arraigned, the individual members were attacked, the judicial system was attacked, every department and office of the administration was attacked. If a man's carriage was overturned by a heap of dust, the magistrates were called upon to answer for an accident. The happiness and good humour of the place was destroyed. Labels flew in all directions. The whole society was in a feverish state.¹⁵

In contrast to this excited state among the English, Spankie pictured the happiness of the natives.

They are happy, and hitherto they are contented, and so they will remain until they are tempted with unseasonable knowledge and told they are naked. They have what they never have had before—a full sense of the security of property. Through your equal protecting authority, they may now be wealthy without danger.¹⁶

He argued the case for the regulations on the ground that the newspapers, in unsettling the minds of the natives, were endangering the security of British power in India. As for the English who desired a free press, they were only a "handful," while the natives would not be fit in a thousand years, if ever, to enjoy the enlightened freedom of European minds. "I hope," he said in concluding, "we are not bound to suffer ourselves to be overthrown by means of these 'paper bullets of the brain,' while we have the means in our power to resist them."¹⁷

The opposing counsels argued for seven hours. And it was a learned

¹⁴ *Home Miscellaneous Series, Vol 535, 343 et seq., Proceedings before His Majesty's most honourable Privy Council in relation to the Appeal by James Silk Buckingham, Esq., against certain regulations of the Bengal Government, on the subject of the Press (London, 1824), 11, 36*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 107

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 109

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 77, 107

assemblage which heard them—the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, the Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, the Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and thirteen other worthies—and which found that the regulations were "conformable to reason and not repugnant to the laws of the Realm" No doubt the learned judges hoped, as did Lord Colchester, who wrote to Lord Amherst, that the decision would strengthen his government both in peace and in war *The Westminster Review* felt differently and pointed out that among the councillors present the larger number were connected with the Ministry and the Board of Control or had been members of the Company's establishment in India ¹⁸

Defeated in the moves by which he had hoped to make possible a return to Calcutta, Buckingham undertook to secure from the Company some compensation for his losses He found a friend in Lambton, the future Lord Durham, who brought his case before the Commons When Lambton presented the petition in May, 1824, he reviewed the events leading up to Buckingham's expulsion and described the petitioner as "a victim of cruel oppression," who had been made "to drink the very dregs of persecution" Wynn, the President of the Board of Control, Astell, the Chairman of the Board of Directors, and Canning opposed the petition Wynn made much of the repeated warnings that had been given the editor After pointing out that Buckingham's license designated him "a free mariner," Astell described his attacks upon the Bengal functionaries, in particular his scandalous assault upon the Lord Bishop of Calcutta. Canning agreed with Astell and Wynn that the case was one for the courts Except for the Tory, Sir Charles Forbes, who read a letter from John Palmer in which Buckingham and his paper were praised, the supporters of the petition came from among the Radicals Hume accused Adam of having acted maliciously and challenged Buckingham's enemies to find any libels in his paper Sir Francis Burdett declared that the case was "one of the most cruel that had ever come before the House", he reminded the House that the warnings given the editor were not proof of his guilt Lambton closed the debate by affirming that he had not hoped to secure compensation for the petitioner but rather that he had desired to give the case publicity ¹⁹

¹⁸ *The Diary of Lord Colchester* (3 vols, London, 1861), 388, *The Westminster Review*, IV (1825), 281

¹⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, XI (1824), 858 *et seq.*, *The Oriental Herald*, II (1824), 293 *et seq.*

As a matter of fact Buckingham had found it impossible to carry the case to the courts. Before leaving Calcutta his attorney, Cutlar Fergusson, had appeared before the Supreme Court with a motion for a civil suit against Adam in England. The required bond was posted, and a solicitor to gather evidence from the witnesses, whose names were in Fergusson's possession, was retained. Unfortunately the solicitor died suddenly, and Fergusson accepted the appointment as Advocate-General in Adam's administration. He thereupon lost all interest in his departed client. Before a year had passed, Fergusson also left India for England, having failed in every respect to carry out those measures upon which a successful suit depended. All Buckingham got in the attempt to appeal to the courts was more expense.²⁰

But publicity had discovered for him friends who were willing to aid his fight, even to the point of carrying the battle into the citadel of his enemies. Under the leadership of Douglas Kinnaird a number of the proprietors of India stock drew up a resolution calling upon the Court of Directors to investigate the regulation of the press in India.²¹ By his fiery Radicalism Kinnaird had won for himself the nickname "Vesuvius," and his outbursts in presenting the resolution justified the title "How was it," he demanded, "if the press was bringing the Government into contempt that Buckingham was the only man to have won a libel suit?" And he attacked Adam, who, having been "tossed up into the seat of the government," had been made "dizzy by power." He described the Acting Governor-General's *A Statement of Facts* as a "disgrace"—and quite correctly so—not only because it gave half-truths as whole-truths but because it did not give truth of any degree if that truth was favourable to Buckingham. Kinnaird called upon the Directors to review the case. Hume supported his resolution.

The old guard at the India House rose to the challenge. Edward Impey, son of the famous Chief Justice of Bengal, and Sir John Malcolm, not long returned from the wars in India, voiced the Tory opinion that a free press was impossible to India. "What lesson," asked the former, "would a free press teach that population? It would teach them that they were subject by force to a foreign government, and in the next place they would be taught the inalienable right of all to free themselves from a foreign yoke." Certainly this

²⁰ *The Calcutta Monthly Journal*, 1823, 187, *The Oriental Herald*, III (1824), 475, 477

²¹ *The Asiatic Journal*, XVIII (1824), 173 *et seq.*

was a frank avowal of "the old Tory" conviction Impey criticized Hastings for a lack of firmness in dealing with the press and praised Adam for his forceful administration of the law In a final burst of eloquence he called upon the Directors to envision an India given over to rapine and pillage if they allowed the press its freedom

When the debate had dragged through several more speeches, Hume, with the idea of carrying it on at another meeting, moved adjournment After some parliamentary juggling, which brought from the chairman a denial that he was trying to gag the debate, the motion failed. The Directors then voted down the original resolution

Two weeks later Hume again brought the case before the Court He offered two motions, one declaring that the free press was beneficial to India, and the other calling for the minutes of the Bengal Council when the press had been discussed Like Kinnaird, Hume attacked Adam, he censured those Directors who had condemned the Acting Governor-General when he left office, but who now sang his praises because of his treatment of the press He asked them to explain why Adam, if he had been so irritated by the circulation of libels, had not suppressed *John Bull* But *John Bull* was a subject which Buckingham's opponents studiously refused to discuss He also replied to Malcolm who had argued that there was no public in India "Whom would the Learned Gentlemen allow to be a Public?" he demanded as he pointed to those addresses of praise which the governor-generals were happy to receive from various elements of the population, even from the commercial group Those who answered him fell back upon Adam's *A Statement of Facts*, making much of the notorious black-edged letter as an example of Buckingham's open and deliberate offences

Throughout these discussions in the Commons and at the India House Buckingham's personal wrongs became submerged in the greater issue of the press in India, and this larger issue was considered only in relation to the maintenance of British power When no one spoke a word for the Indian people, Buckingham became irritated because, although he was intensely interested in his own case, he was not unaware of the deeper significance of the controversy Since he had no way of making himself heard in the Commons, he tried the indirect method of writing to members In May, 1826, after John Cam Hobhouse had spoken against the Alien Bill, Buckingham sent him a letter pointing out that his arguments applied also to the

power of transmission as exercised by the Indian Government and urging him, for the sake of the natives of India, to bring up the question of the freedom of the Indian press ²²

But the crusader found a more effective means of voicing his sentiments at the India House. He secured the possession of Company stock, either by purchase or by loan from a friend, and with it obtained the right to appear before the Directors. In the course of the debate on Hume's motions he took the floor. He explained his original editorial indiscretions as having been those natural to a sailor and denied that he had ever wilfully attacked the Indian Government. He quoted MacNaghten, "that liberty being imperfect in India, it was therefore the more necessary to be careful of what existed." Some of his Indian contemporaries had described the press rules of 1818 as "a tub thrown out to the whale," but he insisted, since they had never been registered by the Supreme Court, that they were legally without effect. And he called attention to the officials who had supported his rival, citing Lushington's command to a civil servant, "You are expected to take the John Bull." Finally he notified the Directors and Proprietors in no uncertain terms of his intentions for India.

While he had life, health, and strength, he would defend the interests and watch over the happiness of the natives of India, and as he was not allowed to whisper truths in India, they should hear them uttered in thunder in the walls of that court, for the information of England and the world ²³

He did not curry favour from those who denied him what he believed to be fair treatment, if justice for himself was to be gained at all, he wished it only with an accompanying recognition of the claims of India for a similar justice. Buckingham's aggressive pressing of his claims for compensation became notorious in his own day, his accompanying efforts to plead for India deserve at least recognition in a later one. The Directors were not impressed by his defiance. They not only defeated Hume's motions but also carried one approving Buckingham's expulsion ²⁴

If the Directors thought that this action would end the affair, they were badly disappointed, for before a month had passed the

²² *British Museum Add. MSS.*, 36460, f. 205, f. 212

²³ *The Asiatic Journal*, XVIII (1824), 305

²⁴ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 534, 1

despoiled editor applied to them directly for a settlement. In his letter of appeal he explained the financial success of *The Journal*, enumerated his losses, and proposed a settlement along one of three lines. First, he more or less modestly asked to be returned to India at the Company's expense, to be given thirty thousand rupees, to be guaranteed against banishment, and to be allowed to start at the bottom again with his paper. If the Directors found this proposal unsatisfactory, he requested either that they allow him to return to India for a short time to clear up his accounts or that they set up a committee to fix the compensation due him. He made it especially clear that he was not seeking charity, he asked for compensation solely on the ground of fair dealing. In refusing to settle on any ground at all, the Company informed him that his losses had been due entirely to his own conduct. When he replied by pointing out that the destruction of his property had been brought about after his departure from India, he received the curt answer that the Directors could find no reason for changing their minds. An appeal to the Board of Control received a similar retort, it could discover no excuse for interfering with the Directors.²⁵

After these rebuffs Buckingham turned to another matter almost as vital to his interests. He filed libel suits in the King's Bench against Murray, publisher of *The Quarterly Review*, against Bankes, Jr., and against the latter's father. Murray's counsel replied to the complaint by expressing his client's regret at having made his paper a vehicle for the circulation of private slander and consented to a verdict of fifty pounds in favour of the plaintiff. Following a postponement from July to December, Bankes, Sr., submitted to a similar verdict. But Bankes, Jr., stood his ground and applied for a postponement until he could send to the Levant for witnesses. He admitted having written the libel letter but denied its publication. This refusal necessitated Buckingham's sending the letter to India where its publication could be proved by Henry William Hobhouse. The letter was dispatched aboard the steamship *Enterprise*.²⁶

Meanwhile an event apparently favourable to Buckingham's interests had occurred. As soon as Arnot arrived in England he placed his case before the Directors. In describing the hardships which he

²⁵ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 534, 15, 53, 74.

²⁶ *The Asiatic Journal*, XX (1825), 246 *et seq.*, *The Oriental Herald*, VIII (1826), 161, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, appendix, 16.

had suffered he did not hesitate to state what he considered the reason for his treatment from the Government

The only explanation I can conceive of this proceeding is this, that some enemy of Mr. Buckingham being desirous of destroying his journal, and not being able to find a decent pretence for its suppression thought of accomplishing this object by procuring the transportation of one of the individuals connected with it, which might probably have the effect of frightening all others from the concern ²⁷

Not content with this flat assertion of the enmity of the Bengal governmental officials to his employer, he cast a lurid aura about their hostility by explaining that the immediate cause of his expulsion was the publication of articles defending the Supreme Court of Judicature against charges in a pamphlet circulated by Dr. Bryce. Arnot also declared that Buckingham's enemies had taken advantage of Lord Amherst's unfamiliarity with the issue to accomplish their ends. After reviewing the facts of his case the Directors voted him fifteen hundred pounds compensation. In passing this measure they made it clear that they approved of his expulsion but believed that he had been subjected to unnecessary harshness ²⁸

As a counteraction to the activities of Buckingham's supporters, the agents and allies of the Company kept up a continuous attack on their protégé. Over and over again *The Asiatic Journal* charged that *The Oriental Herald* was deliberately misrepresenting the plainest facts. But the Company's organ was guilty, it seems, of a similar crime, for Arnot in his letter to the Directors took pains to point out that *The Asiatic Journal* had published misstatements about him ²⁹. Of course this sheet was outraged when Buckingham exposed John Adam's *A Statement of Facts* as "a garbled and distorted mixture of half-told and concealed transactions, with a running commentary made up of inference, wholly unwarranted even by the premises from which they are pretended to be drawn", it accused him of having dishonoured the dead, for Adam had died off Madagascar on a return voyage to England. In reviewing this document, which was issued by the Company to all its functionaries abroad, its proprietors in England, and its supporters in the Commons, *The Asiatic Journal* described it as an "able and masterly statement of fact," praising Adam for properly avoiding the "most distant allusion"

²⁷ *Parliamentary Papers*, XL (1836), 411

²⁸ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 533, 402 et seq

²⁹ *Parliamentary Papers*, XL (1836), 20

to *John Bull* and accusing Hastings of tyranny in his high office. In contrast to these laudatory comments, *The Westminster Review* described the composition as "the *rationale* of despotism," displaying "all the pompous insolence of irresponsible power, curiously blended with the timidity of conscious, feebleness and error"³⁰ The evident gaps in the Acting Governor-General's argument were with reference to just those items whose omission the Company organ praised. As an "old Tory" partisan Adam unquestionably saw *John Bull* only as a faithful defender of the state, as a public official he suppressed the opinions of his one-time superior in order to justify his own conduct. In commanding Adam *The Asiatic Journal* quoted the chief authorities at Bombay and Madras, especially the latter, who had written, "I scarcely know of any act of the supreme Government of which I should like so well to have been the author for in India it requires more firmness and real patriotism to regulate the press than in England to assert its freedom"³¹

Of course the Reverend Samuel James Bryce added his denunciation to those which the Company's agents were hurling at their victim. Bryce wrote a letter from Calcutta to *The Asiatic Journal* raking up Buckingham's Egyptian past. When Murray and Bankes, Sr., submitted to verdicts in the libel cases, Bryce published a long article in his *Oriental Magazine* explaining that the Indian opposition to Buckingham had been based not upon the Bankes accusations but upon Burckhardt's assertions. In the same article Bryce asserted that the real cause of the antagonism to his deported rival was not the latter's support of the free press but his advocacy of the free colonization of India. No doubt this position of Buckingham did arouse some hostile feelings, but, after reading the letters of "A Friend of Mr. Bankes" and the editorial harangues against the freedom of the press, one is inclined to credit the Presbyterian divine with another quick shift in his argument.³²

Arnot's success in securing compensation moved Buckingham's friends to present his case to the Directors again. In January, 1826, Kinnaird, supported as before by Hume, offered a motion calling for the production of papers upon which a grant of compensation could be made. He stated the situation in the light of the recent happenings

³⁰ *The Westminster Review*, IV (1825), 273.

³¹ *The Asiatic Journal*, XVII (1824), 37, XX (1825), 494*.

³² *Ibid.*, XIX (1825), 127, *The Oriental Magazine*, V (1826), 165 *et seq.*

This I will boldly say, that nothing was ever heard in derogation of the good and estimable character of Mr Buckingham, until Mr Bankes's statement appeared, and I will further say, that no man whose mind is not prepossessed and prejudiced can read this vindication of Mr. Buckingham and not be entirely convinced of his innocence. The political enemies of Mr Buckingham made the charges of Mr Bankes the grounds for abuse of the most horrible kind. I have myself received a statement from Doctor Bryce in which he declares his belief in Mr Bankes's accusations. This feeling will, of course, remain until the truth goes forth to India from the courts of justice here. Mr Arnot, like many other literary men, may never have possessed a fortune, but Mr Buckingham on the other hand, had realized a fortune which was destroyed in the manner I have stated. I can form no notion of the distinction which would give to Mr Arnot, yet would refuse restitution to Mr Buckingham.³³

The debate aroused by this motion and speech was even more bitter than before Buckingham's friends had gathered their full strength. They praised his pure character, they described him as "an object of pity", they insisted that even the English Government did not have the power both to transport a man and to confiscate his property. Sir Charles Forbes pictured him at the door of the debtors' prison and called upon the Directors "in the name of justice and humanity" to restore what their government in India had destroyed. Forbes accompanied his plea with a motion to grant him five thousand pounds compensation. Colonel Leicester Stanhope supported this proposal and declared to the open court that "with the exception of Edmund Burke, Lord Cornwallis, Lord Hastings, and Mr Mill, no man had conferred greater benefits on the people of India than this said persecuted Buckingham". The fiery colonel protested that the persecution, animated by "a satanical spirit of revenge," was "more cold blooded" and "heartless" than any other recorded in the nineteenth century. Bursts of applause punctuated his impassioned plea for justice.³⁴

But the Tory Directors remained adamant, replying as before. The editor had attacked the Government without provocation, he had gone about trying to persuade the people that they were mis-governed, "a paternal government" had been most lenient with him, he had brought misfortune upon himself. Sir John Sewell—one time president of the ill-famed Constitutional Association, a position he said he was proud to have held—argued with respect to Buckingham's loss of property "He went to India without any property

³³ *The Oriental Herald*, VIII (1826), 394

³⁴ *Ibid*, 399 *et seq*

—he has none now—he is therefore no worse than he was before”, at least Kinnaird summarized Sewell’s contentions in these words Astell gave the editor’s friends to understand that the function of the Directors was not to act as a board of poor relief Only one among the Directors weakened Randle Jackson proposed, in the name of the Proprietors, that the Court consider the facts of the case Although he denounced Buckingham, he was willing to allow the sentiment of the Proprietors to have the final decision In the end all proposals were again voted down³⁵

One must admire the persistence of Buckingham’s friends, for early in April Kinnaird, acting on the lead of Jackson’s suggestion, appeared before the Directors with a proposal to grant him five thousand pounds The presentation of this motion brought out no new arguments or facts, except perhaps the statement by Forbes that Buckingham had now “to content himself with the crystal stream” Astell, more irritated than ever, informed the agitators that they would do better by their protégé if, instead of appealing to the Court, they would make up a contribution for him The proposal was referred to the general body of Proprietors, and the vote set for April 11, the day before the annual election of Directors In fixing this day the opponents of compensation were taking no chances with the independent country voters, who would be in the city to the number of two thousand or more on the day of the election. The city proprietors turned out in force to defeat the motion, many women being escorted to the India House to swell the count of 436 nays to 157 ayes³⁶

When the result was announced, Buckingham’s only comment was, “The measure of their victim’s cup is full” The newspapers, which were familiar with the facts of the case, had expected a favourable vote, they were outspoken in condemning the Company *The Edinburgh Times* was especially frank, “The honour of English merchants, forsooth! To talk of such a thing after this vote at the India House would require no little effrontery”³⁷

With his fortunes at this low ebb Buckingham found a new friend in Lord John Russell, who presented a second petition to the Commons Russell, after explaining the nature of the ill-treatment

³⁵ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 534, 9

³⁶ *The Oriental Herald*, IX (1826), 369 *et seq.*, *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 534, 21

³⁷ *The Edinburgh Times*, April 15, 1826, *The London Times*, April 2, 1826

suffered by the petitioner and enumerating his fruitless appeals to other authorities, moved to refer the case to a select committee Wynn protested that the opponents of compensation had been tricked, because the resolution had been brought in without giving the usual notice The motion was carried by a vote of 43 to 40. But Wynn forced upon the committee persons closely connected with the Company Russell opposed their inclusion on the ground that they had already decided the case The committee, with Russell as chairman, began to gather evidence and hear witnesses but without result Parliament was prorogued before the committee could make a report ³⁸

Russell's opinion of the case was forcibly stated at a London meeting held to arouse public sentiment in favour of compensation

Having lately had an opportunity of reading all the articles published in Mr Buckingham's Journal which were particularly found fault with by the Indian Government, I can undertake to say there is not one of those articles which not only does not reflect the slightest stain on the character of the writer, but are such as would do honour to any man possessing an honest zeal for the welfare of the community in which he lived, and such as there is every reason to believe were written and published with a perfect conviction on the part of the author and publisher, that he was serving the cause of truth, and was therefore entitled to the thanks of his fellow subjects and the approbation of a wise and benevolent government ³⁹

In the debate on the motion for a committee Russell said that the Bryce article, if judged by English standards of political invective, was "deficient in bitterness, in severity, and in political spirit", he also bore witness to the fact that Hastings, after arriving in England, had exonerated Buckingham from having committed any wilful crime against the Government ⁴⁰ In a speech at this same public meeting Kinnaird, with the sanction of Hastings, quoted the Governor-General as condemning Buckingham's transmission Those present at the demonstration opened a public subscription for the despoiled editor and drew up a petition which called upon the natives and English communities in Calcutta to recognize the falsity of the charges that had been circulated against his character Edward B Lewin, once Advocate-General of Bengal, and Jeremy Bentham,

³⁸ *Parliamentary Debates*, XV (1826), 1004 *et seq*

³⁹ *Mr Buckingham's Defence of his Public and Private Character*, 128

⁴⁰ *Parliamentary Debates*, XV (1826), 1005

who counted Buckingham among his friends, were prominent supporters of the petition

At last in October, 1826, the case of James Silk Buckingham *vs* William John Bankes, Jr., came to trial. The witnesses from the Levant had long been in London, the libel letter, for thus was designated the epistle which Bankes had sent to Calcutta with Henry William Hobhouse, had gone to India and returned, all in pursuit of Hobhouse, who had left India before it arrived there. When the Levantine witnesses reached England, Bankes attempted to force an immediate trial, but, since at that time the libel letter had not returned, the Chief Justice allowed a further postponement on the condition that the plaintiff pay the expense of keeping the defendant's witnesses in London. In spite of his financial straits, Buckingham managed to meet the increased demand.

When the testimony of Hobhouse proved that the defendant had published the libel, Bankes chose to support the truth of his assertions. Antonio and Mahound, the guides of his travels through Palestine and Syria, were placed on the stand, but their memories were too weak to furnish any corroboration of the pointed accusations in the letter. Beside reading into the record Burckhardt's fulminations, Bankes made the claim that Buckingham had not been his travelling companion but merely his hired servant. In the end the case turned on the fact of Buckingham's note-taking, for that was the heart of Bankes's justification that *Travels in Palestine* had been compiled from his notes and illustrated from his drawings, especially that part dealing with the exploration of Jerash. To prove this contention the counsel for Bankes produced a small notebook not two inches square whose contents it was charged had been filched. Since the libel letter declared that Buckingham could not have made any records because he possessed a book only four inches square, Buckingham's attorney found in this marvellously small document an opportunity to demolish the defendant's justification. Holding up the small document before the court, he unctuously gloated, "I admit that this is Mr. Bankes's book, I admit that he had it there, I agree with the witness who says he had it there." Thus illuminated, Bankes's very small notebook became ridiculously large with absurdity, and his case collapsed.⁴¹

After the testimony and the pleas were closed, requiring some

⁴¹ *Verbatim Report of the actions for libel in the case of Buckingham vs Bankes*, 51, 75.

seven hours, the Lord Chief Justice, in a court room crowded with literary and political notables, charged the jury

As to the first plea, of not guilty of publication that is falsified, for, on the part of the plaintiff, it is proved that the defendant did publish the letter, respecting which this action is brought There is then a plea of justification on the record, alleging the whole or different parts of this publication to be true In the evidence, it appears that the defendant has failed in proving two or three, not immaterial but very material parts of the story, and, having failed in the proof of these, it seems to me, *that he has failed altogether in his justification*, and that the plaintiff is entitled to your verdict ⁴²

Since Buckingham had not sued for specific damages, the jury was obliged to fix the amount, and, after deliberating three-quarters of an hour, it reported a verdict of four hundred pounds ⁴³

The slanders with which his detractors in Egypt, India, and England had besmirched his private character were at last wiped out *The London Times*, which had been unfriendly to his claims, now conceded the vindication of his reputation ⁴⁴ Unfortunately "A Friend of Mr Banks" could not be made to undo the financial ruin which his abusive circulation of the libels had wrought And every move to recover compensation had failed In the spring of 1826 before the libel trials, he had made, as might have been expected, another futile appeal to the Directors Although on this occasion he asked for assistance for his wife and children, the Directors delayed over three months before replying with a flat refusal of the request ⁴⁵ "The Journalist of Jerash" had established his integrity, but he was as poor as ever he had been, even as poor as when he was at Jerash

4 COLONIAL AND SOCIAL REFORM

After the success of his Indian venture in journalism it was only natural that Buckingham should set up a paper in England He had left India promising "the old Tories" just such a treat, moreover, the voice which was to thunder India's claims for justice required an organ The first number of the new journal appeared

⁴² *Verbatim Report of the actions for libel in the case of Buckingham vs. Banks*, 79

⁴³ *The Asiatic Journal*, XXII (1826), 619

⁴⁴ *The London Times*, October 20, 1826

⁴⁵ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 534, 177

in January, 1824, under the significant title, *The Oriental Herald and Colonial Review*. Except for *The Asiatic Journal*, the official publication of the East India Company, England had no paper devoted to colonial affairs. "The duty of nations to enlighten and improve the condition of the people they subjugate," he said in an introductory essay, "can scarcely be required to be enforced by argument." From this point of view he proposed to treat colonial problems in terms of colonial interests and at the same time to show the English people that conditions in the colonies were related to their own welfare. He was frank to admit that his own views, notably on the freedom of the press, would colour the opinions expressed in the paper, since he wrote most of the articles, it could hardly have been otherwise.⁴⁶

The journal, which appeared monthly and sold for five shillings a copy, had a fair circulation, but it never became a financial success. The Company tried to exclude it from India, but military men and some of the natives, as well as many of the merchants, managed to secure copies regularly, and, as an army officer wrote to the editor, they found much within its "pretty pale pink covering" to give them mirth. Its chief English supporters were Radicals. When Buckingham's resources gave out in 1826, Lambton, Burdett, Hume, Kinnaird, and others to the number of about fifty came forward with contributions to keep it going until he had another change of fortune.⁴⁷

In view of the circumstances of the editor's career in India, it was to be expected that *The Oriental Herald* would wage bitter warfare against the Company. The burden of its agitation was that the time was fast approaching when the Company's monopoly and dominion would have to be put to an end. A squib entitled "A Vision of Leadenhall Street after St. John" vividly pictured its conception of the Company.

A beast sat upon a throne whose heads were twenty and four. Its body was the body of a tiger and an ass, and on its heads were diadems, and turbans, and helmets, and on the twenty-fourth head a pointed bonnet, with paper of the kind called foolscap, ornamented with bells, and out of the head grew horns.

⁴⁶ *The Oriental Herald*, I (1824), 2 et seq., James Grant, *Random Recollections of the House of Commons* (London, 1838), 337.

⁴⁷ *The Oriental Herald*, II (1824), 299, XII (1827), 487, *British Museum Add MSS.*, 36461, f. 349, *The Sheffield Iris*, March 22, 1836.

On the east of the Throne was the Indus, and on the west the Ganges
On the north was the River Thames, and on the south was a river
whose waters were green and black, and its names were written Hyson
and Souchong

And over the Throne was written the number of the year 1834, and
the beast snarled with a loud voice of innumerable armies,—and cried,
and said, “I await my time”⁴⁸

For five years through the pages of *The Oriental Herald*, before
taking the issue to the country in a speaking campaign, Buckingham
advocated the abolition of the Company’s monopoly and the sup-
pression of its political power

He exposed the home organization of the Company as an ugly
monopoly, which was preyed upon by innumerable parasites
Although the Proprietors received an annual dividend of 10½ per
cent, according to his argument they failed to enjoy the profits
of their privileges The profits went to the moneylenders, to the
noblemen who held the high offices in the Indian administration,
and to the retired military and civil servants who drew large
pensions When the Court of Directors, having added three hundred
pounds to the yearly salaries of certain commissioners already
being paid fifteen hundred pounds, observed that the commissioners,
“being men of high character,” would not accept the increase
unless they earned it, he chortled, “This is a specimen of India
House logic” He quoted with evident pleasure a mock dialogue
from *The Bengal Chronicle* in which the Company was made to say,
“I am two hundred and thirty years old and have never enjoyed
one day of health or peace”⁴⁹

On the other hand he described the Company’s administration
of India as inept and inefficient, if not corrupt “We have kept the
country as the dog in the manger watched the hay we have not
enjoyed it ourselves, nor have we suffered any one else to enjoy it”
The suppression of the natives, he protested, was the necessary
evil of such a policy, while the Company’s agents were “a handful
of foreigners,” who governed the country after the manner of the
princes whom they had ousted Where they had not removed the
princes, as in Hyderabad—“the Sodom of Asia”—they governed
in their name, taxing, imprisoning, and executing in the best

⁴⁸ *The Oriental Herald*, XVII (1828), 531

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, II (1824), 419, XIV (1827), 415 *et seq.*, XIX (1828), 419, XX
(1829), 178

Oriental style, at the same time manipulating the finances to their own profit after the high tradition of the usurers of Europe. He decried a regime which supported two colleges for perpetuating Eastern ignorance but gave not a rupee for the introduction of Western enlightenment. He assailed the authorities for sanctioning widow-burning and drawing revenue from the opium monopoly, which spread disease and moral degradation over all the East. He called upon England to see an India misgoverned, its gentry ruined, its peasantry impoverished (but not worse than that of Ireland), one half of its gross income paid in taxes, its worst vices—opium-using and widow-burning, besides the immoralities of the Juggernaut—exploited for the benefits of the public treasury, and its population denied the advantage either of education or of free intercourse with the world.⁵⁰

As long as the Company always compared its government to that of the native princes, whose power it had usurped, and never to that of a Western state, he saw little hope for improvement. He insisted that there was a higher standard of political conduct than that of an Oriental despotism. The Board of Directors was about as effective in reprimanding its arbitrary agents as a dog barking at the moon, while the judgments of the English at home were more like “the dispassionate judgments of posterity” than the decisions of an informed government. All that India could expect under the existing regime was the continuation of “the heartless policy of Leadenhall Street.”⁵¹

The evils arising from the Company’s monopoly and rule were so many, he said, that the genius of a Newton or a Descartes would be required to sum them up, but he did his best as a substitute. The most abominable among them was the danger to which the Company’s monopoly exposed the English people, namely, the ruin of their commerce. He foresaw a chain of disasters—the China trade lost to America, the expansion of American manufactures under the stimulus of this demand, and the subsequent exclusion of English industrial products from the American market as the inevitable result. He interpreted the American protective tariff of 1828 as a function of this growing situation. He proclaimed that

⁵⁰ *The Oriental Herald*, II (1824), 195, V (1825), 341, VII (1825), 7, 11, 483, 567, VIII (1826), 1, 18, XIV (1827), 417, XV (1827), 142, XXII (1829), 5, 16.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, VI (1824), 190, IX (1826), 115, XV (1827), 239, XVIII (1828), 442.

the title for renewing the Company's monopoly should read "An Act for continuing the East India Monopoly by which the American merchants and seamen are enriched, while English merchants and seamen are reduced to beggary and bankruptcy" He demanded that Parliament act at once to protect the commercial life of the nation These alarmist views were received favourably in the seaport towns, especially in Liverpool⁵²

It is difficult to estimate the rôle which *The Oriental Herald* played in bringing about the change of opinion which began to influence the administration of India after 1828 Certainly the period from 1824 to 1828 was one of growing interest in the Eastern dominion Buckingham recorded that in the earlier year one book on the East appeared each quarter, while four years later the number had trebled In 1829 he was still complaining that the newspapers which took any notice of Indian affairs were chiefly interested in tiger hunts, on the other hand the periodicals were devoting more space to India than ever before⁵³ *The Westminster Review* for October, 1829, when noticing several of the new books on the India problem, remarked that "the East India Question

seems to have passed through the twilight of indifferentism to something like the broad day of discussion," and added, "The important services of Mr Buckingham's *Oriental Herald* to the popular cause of India, ought to be held in lasting remembrance"⁵⁴ "Opinion," this same article said, "is roused on the subject of India," a condition which it explained as the work of "a few active spirits, sharpened by persecution" Certainly Buckingham's spirit had been whetted to a razor-edge

The first fruits of this growing interest was the passage in 1828 of several acts touching minor phases of the Indian administrative system The most important of these measures extended the criminal law reforms to India But the great result of the new attitude was the appointment of Lord William Bentinck as Governor-General of Bengal Under Lord Amherst things had gone from bad to worse The Burmese War, for which Adam was partly responsible, had

⁵² *The Oriental Herald*, I (1824), 117, VIII (1826), 229, XIX (1829), 185-203, XX (1829), 19, XXI (1829), 219, XXII (1829), 399-415

⁵³ *Blackwood's Magazine*, XVII (1825), 574 *et seq.*, 701 *et seq.*, XVIII (1825), 183 *et seq.*, 303 *et seq.*, 401 *et seq.*, *Edinburgh Review*, XLVII (1828), 134 *et seq.*, XLVIII (1828), 335, *Quarterly Review*, XXXV (1827), 32 *et seq.*, 445 *et seq.*, XXXVIII (1828), 489

⁵⁴ *The Westminster Review*, XI (1829), 327*

increased the annual deficit And "the old Tories" had not abated their intolerance In 1827 Courtenay Smith, a judge in Calcutta, was suspended for daring to suggest that the Company's charter might not be renewed, he was found guilty also of advocating the abolition of widow-burning As a result of Smith's expression of such ideas, his character was vilified, his presence in society was denounced, and he was forced to fight a duel When the Government attempted to levy a stamp tax on the resident English, a violent agitation broke out During the excitement *The Calcutta Chronicle*, a paper founded to carry on the principles of *The Calcutta Journal*, was suppressed Although no reason was given for this act, it was let out privately that the Government had been irritated by the paper's protest at official interference with a public meeting held to draw up a petition to Parliament against the stamp tax⁵⁵ These events lent colour to the charges that Buckingham had been sounding in his countrymen's ears With respect to the levying of the stamp tax, he reminded his readers that the loss of the American colonies had been the outcome of a similar mistaken policy

The recall of Amherst was caused by the financial difficulties of his administration, but the appointment of Bentinck, although considered in relation to the fiscal problem, was made with an eye to recovering for the Company some of its lost prestige⁵⁶ And the way to this desired end was known to be reform, particularly for the improvement of the social conditions of native life and the guarantee to the resident English of their legal rights That notice which Bentinck issued from the Government House immediately after assuming his office, calling upon the natives, landholders, merchants, and all Europeans, both in and out of the Company's service, to transmit to him any suggestions that they might care to make with respect to measures for the removal of defects in the existing establishment, was the pronouncement of the end of "the old Tory" regime⁵⁷ Clearly this notice was motivated by a spirit quite the reverse of that which found danger to British power and insults to the Government in epistolary squibs and editorial balderdash

An enumeration of Bentinck's measures—the abolition of suttee,

⁵⁵ F Dawtrey Drewitt, *Bombay in the Days of George IV* (London, 1907), 107, *Official Correspondence relating to the suppression of the Calcutta Chronicle*, 14, *Parliamentary Papers*, IX (1831-32), 122

⁵⁶ D C. Bougler, *op. cit.*, 112

⁵⁷ *The Westminster Review*, XI (1829), 311

the cessation of flogging in the native army, the suppression of thuggee, the admission of natives to juries, and the restoration of a practical freedom of the press—discloses that Buckingham had long been their advocate, and, during the period leading up to the appointment of Bentinck, no one in India or in England had kept the necessity for such reforms so much before the public. The support which the leading Radicals gave *The Oriental Herald* and their continued friendship for his cause are evidence of the appeal which his agitation had made to the reforming element of the country. But Buckingham was more than a recipient of Radical sympathies. He was also an active participant in Radical projects, notably in 1824 when, along with such men as Hume, Hobhouse, and Bowring, he signed the offer of money and munitions which “the Greek Committee” made to the Greek nationalists. Among all those who prepared the way for Bentinck—Hume Kinnaird, Stanhope, and Rickards—he was the most persistent and, without doubt, the most irritating advocate of the specific reforms which were ultimately brought about.⁵⁸

Fortune, while she played many a sharp trick on Buckingham, never deserted him entirely or for long. In 1826 when *The Oriental Herald* was nearly on the rocks, a legacy of some five hundred pounds came to him from India. Buckingham had never known his benefactor, a Robert Becher, who had admired him for the “public zeal and manly conduct” which he displayed during the struggle with “the old Tories.” The legacy was enough to get *The Oriental Herald* on its feet and to start another journalistic enterprise. Thus was reared *The Sphynx*, a weekly newspaper devoted to the improvement of mankind.⁵⁹

As the first move in this hard task Buckingham poured a broadside into England’s system of colonial administration, damning it as “faulty, indolent, arrogant, and oppressive.”⁶⁰ “Millions are subject to the all but despotic government of an obscure office in Downing Street.” The masters of that office, he charged, fancied themselves secure from any public scrutiny. As for the colonial governors, they were mostly “officers bred in the arbitrary principles of military discipline,” and their functionaries were either the same sort or worse, “greedy dependents hurrying to make a fortune” or “highborn but needy roués.” But this attack was only

⁵⁸ *The Westminster Review*, VI (1826), 113, F. Dawtrey Drewitt, *op. cit.*, 5.

⁵⁹ *The Sphynx* July 8, 1827

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

a continuation of the agitation against irresponsible government in the colonies which *The Oriental Herald* had carried on as a part of its campaign against the East India Company. Early in 1824, in calling upon England to consider the ways to secure the highest advantages of her overseas possessions, Buckingham had gone on record in favour of colonial self-government, advocating "pure representative government, emanating entirely from the people"⁶¹ In 1826 he followed up this original pronouncement with two articles under the title, "Considerations on the Relative Duties and Interests of Mother Countries and Colonies"⁶² England's indifference to the colonial problem was exceeded only by her ignorance of it. He condemned her method of colonization as "a mixture of meanness, perfidy, and folly too disgusting to contemplate", he was especially bitter against the practice of sending criminals and jail-birds to Australia. The obligations of the mother country to the colonies—falling within his definition of *colony*, he enumerated Canada, Halifax, Bermuda, the West Indies, Gibraltar, Malta, the Cape, Mauritius, Ceylon, India, and Australia—were, first, the full development of their economic resources, industrial as well as agricultural, and, second, the securing of the colonies against invasion. This security, he argued, was possible only in self-governing colonies. From time to time he supported these views with reports of the despotic conduct of colonial governors and the corruptions which came to light in their administrations, in recording the summary dismissal of a Canadian judge he protested, "Colonists have no rights"⁶³

To appreciate Buckingham's significance as an agitator for colonial reform, one must compare his ideas with those of "the theorists of the thirties," Wakefield and Buller. The broad lines of Buller's caricature of the colonial system, "Mr Mother Country," were sharp accounts of the jobbery, ignorance, and arbitrary conduct of the Downing Street office, while the core of Wakefield's doctrines was systematic colonization, free trade, and self-government for the colonies. Notable also is the fact that Buckingham ascribed the superior prosperity of the United States over the British colonies to its possession of self-government, a position which Lord Durham held in his famous report. In view of the common assertion that the term "responsible government" had its

⁶¹ *The Oriental Herald*, II (1824), 4

⁶² *Ibid.*, X (1826), 205, XX (1826), 1

⁶³ *The Sphynx*, August 17, 1828.

origin in 1829 as the result of the presentation of a colonial petition to Parliament in which the phrase "a responsible ministry" was employed, Buckingham's declaration of 1824 in favour of colonial self-government deserves recognition as a prior statement of the general principle of responsible government and an anticipation of the expression which became the catchword of the colonial reform movement

We are as sincere as we are warm in our admiration of the system of confining the legislation of all countries to the countries themselves, and making the people, as much as possible, the source of the power we are, in fact, advocates from conviction, of pure representative governments, emanating entirely from the people, and made responsible for the exercise of all trust to those from whom they receive it To this state, we believe that not only India but all countries of the earth will come at last ⁶⁴

Of course, it would be going too far on the basis of this brief statement to claim for Buckingham a priority in proposing that peculiar institutional form of colonial self-government which was later worked out, but nevertheless the essential principle of that system is clearly stated That Buckingham had this principle in mind is fully evidenced by his argument for a free press in India, namely, since India possessed no elective legislature to which the administration was accountable, the free press was a necessity as a substitute controlling power

In fact, both in the agitation of his grievance against the East India Company and in his published writings on colonial policy, Buckingham was a precursor of those men who elaborated the ideas that found their official expression in Lord Durham's report During the 1820's his case was a notorious example of the irresponsibility of colonial government, at the same time—before Wakefield

⁶⁴ For Buckingham's chief statements on colonial policy see *The Oriental Herald*, II (1824), 1-13, "Necessity of a Controlling Power in India", X (1826), 205-214, "Considerations on the Relative Duties and Interests of Mother Countries and Colonies", and *The Sphynx*, July 8, 1827, a leading editorial on "The Colonial Governments of England" To compare Buckingham's ideas with those of "the colonial reformers" see J A Williamson, *A Short History of British Expansion* (New York, 1922), 477. W P Morrell, *British Colonial Policy in the Age of Peel and Russell* (Oxford, 1930), Chapter I, Sir Charles P Lucas, editor, *Lord Durham's Report on the Affairs of British North America* (3 vols, Oxford, 1912), I, 137, II, 261. Edward Gibbon Wakefield, *England and America* (New York, 1834), 153, 242, 331, and Charles Buller, *Responsible Government for Colonies* (London, 1840), 2.

published *A Letter from Sidney* in 1829—his writings spoke more fully than those of any other man against the evils under which colonists lived. Indeed, in Buckingham, England had one of her first active propagandists of those imperial reforms which were to transform the mercantilist empire into the British Commonwealth of Nations. He envisioned a group of self-governing colonies, in which skill, capital, and enterprise would have free play for the enrichment both of the colonies and of the mother country, and they would be united one to the other only by a common patriotism.

In suggesting the occupation of Egypt and the acquisition of a canal to Suez, he anticipated another development of imperial policy. As early as 1824 he declared that communication with India by steam through the Red Sea could be made safe only by holding a series of stations along the entire route. He insisted also that, if any nation was to occupy Egypt, that nation must be England. In this connection it should be remembered that he knew the Red Sea route as well as any man in England at that time.⁶⁵

Just as *The Sphynx* only continued Buckingham's agitation of the colonial problem, so also did it only amplify his discussion of domestic reforms. In the first number of *The Oriental Herald* an article, "Great Britain at the Commencement of 1824," gave a statistical account of the increase of poverty since 1815. He refused to subscribe to the current conviction of the political economists, Tories, and religious conservatives, that the mass of mankind is doomed by nature to misery. He held the contradictory opinion that misery has "human causes" and that those who ascribe its existence to nature are blinded either by selfishness or by ignorance. The basis of the advocacy of social reforms by *The Sphynx* was this keen appreciation of the miseries of life for common men. Buckingham, although he marvelled at "the astounding increase of wealth," was acutely aware of the evils of life for the workers in the new factory towns and, faced with the contrast between these two facts, he asked, "Has not machinery altered the whole framework of society?" and urged England's statesmen, legislators, and political economists to consider the problem of the working class from this point of view. He also pointed out that the deprivations forced upon the workers by low wages and unemployment generally decreased consumption, which in turn, by adding to the prevailing crime, immorality, and misery, deranged the entire social structure.

⁶⁵ *The Oriental Herald*, I (1824), 87, V (1829), 256.

The Sphynx was, therefore, a thoroughgoing Radical sheet, but with additions, for, though urging the usual Radical programme of retrenchment, abolition of sinecures, and free trade, it demanded that the state interfere to check the accumulations of the rich. Its editor viewed the central problem of domestic reform in terms of the distribution of wealth.⁶⁶

"Liberal opinion," *The Sphynx* exclaimed, "is always defeated 'in another place' where the cry of 'high rents' and 'exclusive privileges' is raised in reply to the petitions of the poor and the oppressed." The House of Lords was "the great obstacle to reform." The lay peers were "indolent" and "irresponsible," with minds like woolsacks, and the bishops were "the most lowborn and subservient race on the face of God's earth." The paper had no use for Wellington. "Very slight boundaries divide the distinction between a military government, and the government of a military minister, —we have the one—heaven, protect us from the other!" "Meet while you may!" it urged the people, and a nautical metaphor described its conception of the Cabinet's policy, "Our own ship's company are too frequently quarrelling over the grog, or casting sheep's eyes at the cargo, when they should be dressing the vessel's course, albeit 'the greatest captain of the age' is the commander."⁶⁷

As revealed by a study of *The Calcutta Journal*, *The Oriental Herald*, and *The Sphynx*, the effect of Buckingham's direct contact with the conditions and forces of English life was a rapid development of his ideas of social reform. The duties of "a patriot minister," he said, were to abolish sinecures, to establish free trade with all the world, and to legislate against the growth of great fortunes. He did not join in the outcry against the stamp tax, on the contrary he insisted that "the imposts which take the bed from under the poor man," such as taxes on soap, leather, candles, and corn, ought to be the first repealed. The only just tax was a graduated property tax which threw the burden on those best able to pay. He condemned the vagrant laws as "a concatenation of cruelty, error, vagueness, and nonsense," having their origin in "the hatred of the lower orders," and expressed his contempt for those who used the phrase "the lower orders" by adding the qualifying clause "as

⁶⁶ *The Oriental Herald*, I (1824), 91, 104, *The Sphynx*, July 29, 1827, also April 12, 1828.

⁶⁷ *The Sphynx*, July 15, 1827, January 28, 1828, February 16, 1828, March 18, 1828, October 11, 1828, February 7, 1829.

they are termed" In India he had supported parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation, his immediate contact with English life not only increased his zeal for these measures but also awoke him to an interest in a wide variety of other reforms, especially in the amelioration of the lot of the labouring poor He advocated the abolition of slavery, the game laws, flogging in the army and navy, and all capital punishments As the best means of improving public health he proposed the destruction of water monopolies and intra-mural cemeteries, the erection of public slaughter houses, and the introduction of the practice of burning the dead Education at government expense, he believed, was the right of every child He identified himself with the temperance and peace movements, which were then gathering strength, and to cap the climax he went on record in favour of rights for women⁶⁸

Carlyle characterized the late 'twenties as "the Talking Era" and observed that Buckingham was "notable under various figures",⁶⁹ perhaps he was to the agitation of social reform what he hoped *The Sphynx* to be to journalism—colossal in magnitude and minute in detail

In spite of the labour necessary to the pursuit of all these interests, Buckingham found time, capital, and energy to launch another venture in journalism In January, 1828, he started *The Athenaeum*, whose contribution to the world of literary opinion is known to every student of the Victorian age Just as *The Sphynx* was to oppose the Tory forces in politics, so was *The Athenaeum* to resist "the influx of a second barbarism" in literature In "a severe but just picture of the times" the founder called attention to the great change which had come over England during the past century and how this change had occasioned a great multiplication of books of inferior quality He explained this literary phenomenon as the result of the increase of wealth among the middle classes, whose only demand in a book was that it be new Their taste was confused—"like painting and gilding a ship before giving it ballast"—for they sought ornamentation rather than substance He feared "the torrent of dissipation, frivolity, and corruption" in literature but did not agree with the prevailing pessimism which bewailed the

⁶⁸ *The Oriental Herald*, II (1824), 432, III (1824), 317 *et seq.*, IV (1824), 27, XVIII (1828), 546, *The Sphynx*, July 29, 1827, February 17, 1828, March 19, 1828, March 26, 1828, June 18, 1828, March 14, 1829

⁶⁹ Thomas Carlyle, *Life of John Sterling* (London, 1851), 57

disappearance of the love for literature and the disintegration of its spirit *The Edinburgh Review* greeted the new paper with compliments and wished its "excellent conductor" all the success to which his "great merits and undeserving persecutions" entitled him⁷⁰

Among those who carried the burden of keeping the columns filled were the Reverend Henry Stebbings and Charles Knight, who later became well known for his work in creating a cheap press Even more noteworthy were two younger men, Frederick Dennison Maurice and John Sterling, who made their literary débuts through its pages They joined the staff early in 1828 Buckingham came in contact with Maurice through his activity in the peace movement, he met Sterling as the secretary of a political club After the first few weeks of the paper's life Buckingham gave up the managing editorship to Stebbings, the latter and the younger men set the style of the articles, if not the tone of the paper It was this dual aspect of *The Athenaeum* which led Carlyle to mistake Sterling for an ultra-Radical in politics, the Radicalism belonged to Buckingham⁷¹

Meanwhile, besides projecting *The Verulam*, a scientific periodical, which was quickly absorbed in *The Athenaeum*, and *The Argus*, an evening paper that lasted only a month, the ambitious editor continued his own literary work Between 1825 and 1829 three books came from his pen—*Travels among the Arab Tribes* in 1825, *Travels in Mesopotamia* in 1827, and *Travels in Assyria, Media, and Persia* in 1829 Certainly these volumes gave the lie to the accusation that the *Travels in Palestine* had been compiled from stolen materials, and their publication was generally applauded The reception of *Travels in Mesopotamia*, the most detailed of the volumes, was enthusiastic *The London Literary Chronicle* praised the author, "He is one of those (a sadly-circumscribed number) few, who look with their own eyes on the things which lie before them, and who are gifted with the ability to supply mankind with vivid, original, and correct descriptions," and reminded the public that he had been made to suffer from "acts of the most intolerable injustice that ever were committed" *The London Magazine*, The

⁷⁰ *The Athenaeum*, I (1828), 1, "Characteristics of the Present State of English Literature", *The Edinburgh Review*, XLVII (1828), 134

⁷¹ John C Francis, *John Francis, publisher of the Athenaeum, a literary chronicle of half a century* (2 vols, London, 1888), I, 21, *The Athenaeum*, 1878, 88, "The Athenaeum in 1828-1830" by Dr Henry Stebbings, Frederick Maurice, *Life of Frederick Dennison Maurice* (2 vols, London, 1884), I, 78, 79, Thomas Carlyle, *loc cit*

Atlas, and *The Globe* lauded the book as rich in material, amusing and gratifying to the public taste. The latter added the comment, "It is one of the most valuable contributions that has been made, in modern times, to our knowledge of the ancient and modern state of Asia." The critics agreed with *The Monthly Review* in admiring "the manly and truly British character" of the author whose pages, in the words of *The Monthly Magazine*, gave "ample proofs of industry and research, of observance abroad and diligence at home." Henceforth "the Journalist of Jerash" was "the distinguished Oriental traveller."⁷²

5 THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

It was not accident which sent Buckingham to Liverpool to begin his speaking campaign against the renewal of the Company's Charter. The merchants of that port, although they had become rich in the slave and sugar trade, were unhappy in their exclusion from the commerce with the Orient. In 1792 and 1813, when their efforts were partially successful, they had attacked the Company's monopoly. After 1813, although the East India Association formed then was kept alive, the agitation was allowed to lapse until the summer of 1827, when the republication by *The Mercury* of two articles from *The Oriental Herald* provoked a sharp newspaper discussion. As a result the East India Association appointed a committee to investigate the means of opposing the renewal of the China monopoly. Its report urged the abolition of the monopoly on the ground that its continuation would lose the trade of the East to America.⁷³

Meanwhile Buckingham, preparing for his own attack upon the Company, had sounded out the sentiments of the country by sending materials to some three-hundred-odd provincial newspapers. When over half of the papers republished the articles, he hesitated no longer in making up his mind to deliver a series of lectures in the chief commercial towns of the kingdom.

⁷² *The London Literary Chronicle*, March 10, 1827, *The London Magazine*, VII (1827), 536, *The Atlas*, February 25, 1827, *The Globe*, March 15, 1827, *The Monthly Review*, IV (1827), 419, *The Monthly Magazine or British Register*, n.s., III (1827), 417.

⁷³ *The Liverpool Mercury*, September 21, 1827, September 28, 1827, October 12, 1827, *The Oriental Herald*, XVII (1828), 349.

He arrived in Liverpool January 2, 1829, and three days later gave his first lecture, followed on alternate days by three more, and if one can believe the contemporary newspaper accounts, his success was phenomenal. Audiences of the "highest respectability," composed of "a large portion of the mercantile wealth and eminence of the town," including the ladies, greeted him. They acclaimed him when he appeared upon the platform, they listened to him with a most "intense" respect, and they cheered him with applause "too frequently to note." His benevolent and intelligent cast of feature" and his "free and elegant style" "really fascinated his auditors."⁷⁴

His hearers appreciated the description of the countries of the East, but they saved their greatest attention and applause for the fourth lecture, the attack of the East India Company. The union of circumstances was perfect, for him the lecture was a labour of love, and for them it was like the cooing of a lover to his sweetheart. And like a lover, he spoke nothing new, it was the old story of the Company's inefficient administration and dog-in-the-manger policy. They laughed and cheered at his epigrammatic summation of the Company's incapacity. "Let every man do what he does not understand, and that which he does understand, let some one else do for him." And the moral of his tale could be drawn by every one, "Let the Liverpool merchants carry on the trade with China." Little wonder then that, at the conclusion of the address, the mayor moved a resolution of thanks for the speaker and the audience voted it with great enthusiasm.⁷⁵

Nor were his labours ineffective. The day after the delivery of his

⁷⁴ *The Liverpool Times*, January 6, 1829, *The Liverpool Observer*, January 8, 1829, *Gore's Liverpool Advertiser*, January 8, 1829. "The manner of this gentleman confers additional interest on the subject matter of his discourse and he himself is a striking instance of the union of those qualities most to be desired—the *simpliciter mordax*. His style is peculiarly suited to the delivery of lectures, intended to be rendered familiar and accessible. It may be described as conversational oratory. It is complete delineation. We wander with the traveller and scarce need a chart to guide us on our way, we roam with him by the banks of the Nilus, we descend into the catacombs, or calculate the height of a pyramid, we take possession of his treasures, and imagination bodies forth, with the fidelity of a diagram, scenes which so far as we are concerned, may almost be termed visionary."

⁷⁵ *The Liverpool Albion*, January 12, 1829, *The Liverpool Times*, January 13, 1829, *Gore's Liverpool Advertiser*, January 15, 1829, *The Liverpool Chronicle*, January 17, 1829, *A Copious Report of Mr. Buckingham's Lectures on the Eastern World including remarks on the East India Company Monopoly, Renewal of the Charter, Effects of Free Trade to India and China delivered in Liverpool on the 5th, 7th, 9th, and 10th of January, 1829, 28 et seq.*

last lecture, January 9, saw a petition in circulation. It asked the mayor to call a public meeting to consider the Company's monopoly, and within five days one hundred and sixty-two of the town's leading bankers, merchants, and burgesses had signed it. The mayor set the meeting for January 28 and appointed a committee under the chairmanship of John Gladstone, father of the great Liberal, to draw up resolutions to be presented at that time. Besides adopting these resolutions, which demanded the removal of all restrictions upon trade with India and China and condemned the Company's government in India, the meeting took action to arouse the country. It authorized a committee headed by the mayor to proceed as might be deemed advisable toward this end and started a subscription to raise a fund to support the movement throughout the kingdom. Buckingham's visit "had been attended with surprising success", he had given "a fresh impulse" to the war against "the Leadenhall Street gentry."⁷⁶

After spending a week visiting with his new friends in Liverpool, the crusader returned to London where he found letters from Glasgow, Leeds, Hull, Bristol, Whitby, and Dublin inviting him to give his lectures. But the interest created by a passing visit to Manchester decided him upon returning to the Midlands at once. He was in Manchester the first week in March, in Birmingham the second, in Bristol the third, in Leeds at the end of the month, and he took each town as by storm. *The Manchester Times* observed, "Mr. Buckingham has brought forward the inhabitants of Liverpool as one man, to oppose the continuance of the East India Monopoly, and we have every reason to believe that he has produced an equally powerful sensation here." *The Manchester Guardian* described his audiences as "the most numerous, the most respectable, and the most attentive" that had ever attended a course of lectures in the town and declared that the commercial public would do justice neither to themselves nor to Buckingham until they had secured a seat for him in Parliament. Both Birmingham and Bristol gave him a vote of thanks and best wishes for the continued success of his "public-spirited and patriotic career." *The Leeds Patriot* hailed him as "the harbinger of better times."⁷⁷

⁷⁶ *The Liverpool Chronicle*, January 10, 1829, *The Liverpool Times*, January 13, 1829, *The Liverpool Observer*, January 15, 1829.

⁷⁷ *The Oriental Herald*, XX (1829), 228, *History of the Public Proceedings on the Question of the East India Monopoly during the past year*, 14 et seq., *The Manchester Times*, February 7, 1829, *The Leeds Patriot*, February 21,

But the London papers were not so enthusiastic about the lecturer. *The Morning Journal* thought that he might have considered himself sufficiently notorious without having sallied into the provinces to teach the natives political economy. It also had a low opinion of those who flattered him with their attention:

Base lucre is the motive, and, therefore, Mr CROPPER smiles on Mr BUCKINGHAM!—the twist and the calicoes are concerned, therefore, Mr GLADSTONE bows to the traveller!—the sugar and the tea trade are involved, therefore Mr BENSON stands *behind* the chair of Mr BUCKINGHAM! Oh dear! oh dear!—but so much for quackery and Mr BUCKINGHAM!⁷⁸

The Morning Post was even more vehement in its condemnation of the “self-appointed lecturer” who with “great discretion” chose Liverpool as the scene of his labours. In view of the fact that this sheet was urging the government to send a Lord Lieutenant to Ireland to trample down the seeds of rebellion and manacle the agitators, its liberality was at least suspect. Both papers circulated in the most fashionable circles of the metropolis. *The Public Ledger* looked upon the whole agitation as foolish. “We repeat that we suspect the East India Company’s Charter is almost as impregnable as the Magna Charta!” In contrast to these severe criticisms, *The British Traveller* saw something “of retributive justice” in the lecturer’s endeavours.⁷⁹

More pleasing to him than the approval won everywhere by his lectures, was his success in arousing the country against the Company. Following his appearance in the Midlands, each of the towns in which he had spoken held a public meeting to draw up a petition to Parliament, and Bristol, in addition to preparing a petition, appointed a committee to work with the Liverpool group in organizing the campaign. Meanwhile the Liverpool committee had communicated with two hundred and seventy towns, many of which joined in the movement to send a deputation to London. Glasgow formed an East India Association and raised money to support the agitation.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ 1829, *The Birmingham Gazette*, March 6, 1829, *The Bristol Journal*, March 27, 1829

⁷⁹ *The London Journal*, January 14, 1829

⁸⁰ *The London Morning Post*, January 17, 1829, *The London Public Ledger*, January 22, 1829, *The British Traveller*, January 15, 1829, *The Oriental Herald*, XX (1829), 220

⁸¹ *The Oriental Herald*, XXI (1829), 383, 386, *The Sphynx*, April 18, 1829, *The Bristol Mirror*, April 18, 1829, *The London Times*, April 13, 1829.

While the provincial merchants were completing their organization, Buckingham undertook to arouse London. Three days after closing his stay in Leeds, he appeared in the metropolis. With usual audacity he selected The City of London Tavern, not a five-minute walk from the East India House, as the place of his *début*. But the city was cold. Only twenty persons heard his first lecture, during the entire week the audience never exceeded seventy. Except for *The Times*, which stated that next to Catholic emancipation the abolition of the East India monopoly was of "universal interest," the newspapers took no notice of him. Notwithstanding this bad beginning, he kept up his efforts throughout the spring, speaking at no less than seven different places in the city and Westminster, but with no great success. His largest audience did not reach two hundred, and on one occasion he spoke to only seven.⁸¹

Late in April the merchants from Liverpool, Bristol, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and Glasgow arrived in London to make an appeal to the government. Before their interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Board of Trade, they held a meeting with Buckingham at the St. James' Hotel. When they decided to exclude him from their public proceedings, he accepted the decision with the comment that in England "principles are more important than men." The government gave its word to the merchants that a committee to investigate the Indian question would be appointed during the next session of Parliament.⁸²

Faced with this delay the parliamentary spokesmen for the agitation decided to test the sincerity of the government by bringing up the resolution for a committee, notice of which had already been given by Whitmore, member for Northbridge. On May 12 the Manchester and Birmingham petitions were presented to the Lords, while that of Liverpool was laid before the Commons. In reply to Lord Lansdowne, who inquired as to the government's intention on the question, Ellenborough said that no decision would be made without an investigation. Two days later the Whitmore resolution came up for debate in the Commons. Goulburn, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in answering Whitmore, reiterated

⁸¹ *History of the Public Proceedings on the Question of the East India Monopoly during the past year*, 19, *The Oriental Herald*, XXI (1829), 365. British Museum Add. MSS., 36466, f. 89. J. S. Buckingham to John C. Hobhouse, *The London Times*, April 7, 1829.

⁸² *History of the Public Proceedings on the Question of the East India Monopoly during the past year*, 20-22.

the promise for a committee Wynn, the President of the Board of Control, supported him Even Astell, the President of the East India Directors, tactfully gave a welcome to the inquiry Brougham approved delaying the appointment of the committee until 1830 Only Hume argued for immediate action, he offered to provide the committee with enough documentary evidence to keep it busy for a month The motion was voted down without a roll call ⁸³

Buckingham's enemies did not hesitate to find the motive for his agitation in a spite at the Company on account of its refusal to compensate him for his losses in India He answered this "oft-repeated calumny" with fine sarcasm

If those who advocate Despotism and Monopoly claim for themselves unexceptional motives and conscious integrity, I can conceive of no good reason why those who advocate Freedom and fair and open trade, should not be equally entitled to credit for the sincerity of their motives and the integrity of their intentions also ⁸⁴

He protested that he was not against men but against a system and that he felt that he had a right to be heard For those who were not satisfied with this explanation of his conduct, he had only defiance "My motives are known only to God and to myself, and I am satisfied of their purity" ⁸⁵

More to the point than this questioning of his motives was the accusation that he was turning his misfortunes into a source of income This charge—it was true in a way—was based on the fact that he collected a half-crown admission fee from those who attended his lectures In the provincial towns where the audiences ranged from a hundred to six hundred persons, the sums thus realized were considerable And he quickly learned the techniques of getting a crowd—placing placards in shopkeepers' windows, giving free admission to prominent persons, and selling tickets for the series as a whole But he needed the money He wrote to five hundred persons asking for contributions to support the agitation, and only five responded Twice during the month in the Midlands he was arrested for debt, once at the door of his lecture-hall Moreover, his absence from London reacted so adversely upon his journalistic enterprises that he decided to sell them When he returned from Leeds he disposed of his interests in *The Sphynx*

⁸³ *Parliamentary Debates*, XXI (1829), 1270 *et seq.*, 1292 *et seq.*, 1335 *et seq.*

⁸⁴ *History of the Public Proceedings on the Question of the East India Monopoly during the Past Year*, 20

⁸⁵ *Ibid*

and *The Athenaeum* *The Oriental Herald* was continued until the end of 1829. During the remainder of his life, except for four years in Parliament, Buckingham's only occupation was that of a professional lecturer. At least this much can be said for him he is a rare agitator who can find audiences willing to pay for listening to his speeches.⁸⁶

Parliament's failure to appoint a committee on the India question gave him an opportunity to set out on his lecturing career with the prospect of friendly audiences. July found him in Scotland where he spent the summer, autumn and early winter took him, by way of the east coast towns, back to London. For six months, day in and day out, he travelled and spoke, was feted and dined, all the while never missing "an opportunity to give his old oppressor a kick." Everywhere his lectures aroused the same enthusiasm that had attended their delivery in the Midlands. Even in Edinburgh, where an agent of Dr Samuel James Bryce tried to heckle him, he was lauded to the skies. *The Caledonian Mercury* compared him as a "conteur" to those companions of the desert whom he described "with an archness and effect peculiarly *frappant* and felicitous." *The Observer* declared "that were such a man to devote himself entirely to delineating the face of the earth by word of mouth, he would do more to advance geographical knowledge than all the professors in Britain." In other parts of Scotland the response was just as warm. *The Greenock Advertiser* praised his delivery, "His voice is clear and agreeable his gesticulation is chaste and varied. he is never caught in an ungraceful attitude." Every one agreed that as an advocate of freedom in commerce he was "eloquent and able", in fine, "destined for the task" of opposing the evils of monopoly. "The East India Company had never had an opponent so powerful". he was the modern Hercules strangling the modern Nemean Lion.⁸⁷

The climax of his success came in Glasgow where the East India Association received him with open arms. In addition to giving his lectures, which won him "unbounded" popularity, he appeared, by

⁸⁶ *The London Morning Journal*, January 14, 1829, *History of the Public Proceedings on the Question of the East India Monopoly during the past year*, 20, 23, A B Bell, ed., *Peeps into the Past, being passages from the diary of Thomas Ashe Ward* (Sheffield, 1909), 296

⁸⁷ *The Caledonian Mercury* (Edinburgh), July 16, 1829, *The Edinburgh Observer*, July 17, 1829, *The Dundee Courier*, August 4, 1829, *The Greenock Advertiser*, September 4, 1829



SHEFFIELD FROM "THE PARK"

A Painting by H. P. Parker 1843 Photograph by the courtesy of David Flather, Master Cutler, 1926-27

invitation, at a number of municipal functions On August 18 he spoke at the Grand Masonic Dinner held on the occasion of laying the foundation of a new bridge across the Clyde, two weeks later he responded to a toast at a dinner celebrating the opening of the city's Royal Exchange The first effort carried him to new heights of eloquence After referring to the bridge as joining the banks of the Clyde in "a nuptial union," he proposed the marriage of the river.

I would wed the Clyde itself, and to a noble family—aye, even to a whole family—for though I am no advocate of polygamy with mortals, yet since it is an Eastern bride that I would provide for your colder stream I see nothing to prevent the nuptials being wholly Eastern so that the Clyde may become polygamous on the occasion, and wed at once those splendid streams, the Tigris, the Euphrates, the Indus, and the Ganges Sirs, this would be a splendid marriage only let the Caledonian's veins once be swelled with the amorous embrace of these Eastern brides, and, my life upon the issue, he will never afterwards be cold in blood, though his uncovered limbs were shivering on Ben Lomond, or "Freezing on the hoary Caucasus"⁸⁸

With such a prospect held before them, it is not surprising that many of the city's leading merchants and manufacturers felt that the speaker ought to have a seat in Parliament

6. M P FOR SHEFFIELD, 1832

Buckingham's fame had reached Sheffield long before he arrived there in the second week of July, 1831 Two years before, when his Scottish admirers had suggested that a seat in Parliament ought to be found for him, one of the local papers, *The Iris*, had boldly proposed a national subscription to buy him a borough Now, although he came to give lectures, he stayed to give speeches, for no sooner had his discourses on the East created the usual sensation than one of his hearers wrote to *The Iris* recommending his election to Parliament. Since the Second Reform Bill seemed certain of an early passage, the town would be free to choose him as one of its own representatives "Auditor," as the writer of the letter signed himself, declared that Sheffield could do no better than to return "the man to whom in all likelihood Great Britain will be mainly indebted for that freer intercourse with the eastern world" With this stimulus *The Iris* at once revived its old enthusiasm, made the

⁸⁸ *History of the Public Proceedings on the Question of the East India Monopoly*, 61, quoted from *The Glasgow Chronicle*, August 20, 1829

lecturer its own candidate, and hastened to explain to every one that he was "in no way privy to the advance of his name"⁸⁹

The credit for having first suggested sending Buckingham to Parliament belongs to *The Manchester Guardian*. The issue of February 7, 1829, urged his election as "an object of great importance" "Shall the door be closed against an energetic, talented, and high-principled advocate of free trade?" Three days later *The Liverpool Times* concurred in the recommendation, agreeing that he would be "by far the most powerful advocate which the mercantile interests could possess." The same feeling was expressed wherever he went. His Glasgow proponents saw him not only as the foe of monopoly but also as an able defender of British liberties. Considering the sources of these suggestions and the praise with which his work had been received everywhere outside of London, it was not surprising that he developed ambitions to sit in Parliament or that he gave a ready assent to the Sheffield movement.⁹⁰

The Iris admitted that certain persons might reasonably doubt his qualifications, but it found them superior in every respect. His manners were urbane and gentlemanly, his talents as a speaker were unrivaled, and his knowledge of the world and trade was unsurpassed. To those who called him "a mercantile projector," it replied that he was among the few who dared to assert that commerce is better than war. Those who decried the unorthodox character of his introduction to the town were reminded that he possessed a wide and influential body of friends. His political ideas were moderate and enlightened. He was "no violent politician," "no radical party man," "no ultra-reformer," and the aims of his activity were unquestionably noble—the abolition of slavery, the freedom of trade, the extension of national happiness, and the organization of universal peace. Even his London residence was in his favour, for, besides enabling him to keep in close contact with every important movement of opinion, it deprived him of any perpetual right over the electorate, such as a local man might come to possess, as a representative of the town his sole claim to its suffrage would be the faithfulness with which he spoke its judgments and served its interests.

He opened his own campaign with a speech at the Music Hall,

⁸⁹ *The Sheffield Iris*, August 18, 1829, July 12, 1831.

⁹⁰ *The Manchester Guardian*, February 7, 1829, *The Liverpool Times*, February 10, 1829, *The Leeds Mercury*, August 13, 1831.

in which he expounded to a large body of electors the qualifications they should seek in their representatives, one of whom, he said, should be a local man, familiar with the peculiar interests of the town, while the other ought to be a person of wide experience and varied knowledge. He asked the electors to consider whether the larger advantage of the town would not be best served by a man who was intimately acquainted with foreign countries and their laws, as well as with the colonies and their relations to the mother country. After detailing his ideas of reform legislation, he assured them of his own legal qualification and urged them to unite to secure for themselves the fullest benefits of their franchise. When he finished, deafening cheers filled the room, the assembly voted him its thanks, and many admirers pledged him their support. Later Thomas Asline Ward, who moved the resolution of thanks, had good cause to regret his hasty approval of "a most plausible man."

Seven or eight local men were also discussed as possible candidates, but none aroused such enthusiasms and antagonisms as did "the outsider," who found opposition everywhere. An agent of the East India Company came to town. At the same time a pamphlet, painting Buckingham as a scamp and a villain, found its way out from London. He was a "quack" and a "charlatan." He was "a man with a grievance." He was "a poor man seeking a place." By designating him "the Indian Cobbett," his enemies hoped that the wealthy electors would associate him with the English prototype, whom they despised and feared as the idol of the mob. The most bitter among his opponents never ceased repeating that he was only an "itinerant lecturer," a person who had made himself "so cheap and familiar with all classes of the community" that it would be "vastly undignified" to elect him as the "voice, eye, and advocate of aristocratical Sheffield." But more clever than these serious-minded critics were those impudent ones who, amused rather than impressed by the variety of his projects, the intensity of his zeal, and the volubility of his tongue, dubbed him—with something more than simple aptness—"Lord Hum." To them he was "a free lance ready to do battle with all existing or imaginary abuses," a quixotic adventurer as much like the windmill as he was a fighter of windmills.⁹¹

Following the speech to the electors on August 1, Buckingham

⁹¹ *The Sheffield Iris*, August 2, 1831, *The Sheffield Independent*, August 27, 1831, September 24, 1831, J. A. Hunter, *The History and Topography of the Parish of Sheffield in the County of York* (London, 1859), 179.

went to Nottingham and nearby towns to lecture His departure left the field to his enemies, and they made the most of it *The Mercury*, the only newspaper openly hostile, laid a barrage of insinuations and innuendoes against his private and public character But more to the detriment of his cause were the effects of the pamphlet which the East India Company clandestinely distributed Its author was Buckingham's former employee in Calcutta, Sanford Arnot, whom the Company had seen fit to recompense Arnot's bombard purported to give Buckingham's true history, describing him as an ex-Methodist, a one-time Mohammedan, a gay man, a quarrelsome fellow, and a duellist He was accused of having falsified the accounts of *The Calcutta Journal*, as well as having plotted his own expulsion from India, in order to profit at the expense of the other stockholders Buckingham's wilful misrepresentations were proved by comparing the estimated value of the paper in 1822 with its sale price two years later, twenty thousand pounds at the former date and one-tenth as much in 1824 To an informed person this manipulation of the facts was obviously malevolent, but to others somewhat anxious to see evil the pamphlet supplied the evidence for the support of the vague rumours which were circulating everywhere ⁹²

His friends were not dismayed by this scurrility. On the contrary they took the offensive, prepared a requisition, and, upon his return in the second week of September, met him at the Staffordshire Potteries to present it At the head of the list of signers stood the name of the prominent manufacturing concern, Naylor, Hutchison, Vickers & Co , among other important firms to sign the petition were Ibbotson Bros, William Ash & Co , Vickers & Sons, and Kirby, Gregory & Co In all, one hundred and thirty-four "Merchants, Manufacturers, Tradesmen, and others" approved his political views, expressed their confidence in his qualifications, and invited him to become a candidate for "one of the most independent and incorruptible constituencies in the kingdom" He accepted "with pleasure" and offered to give any explanations of his "principles, opinions, character, and conduct" which they might demand ⁹³

Buckingham's first act after having received the requisition

⁹² Sanford Arnot, *The History of the Indian Press with a disclosure of the extraordinary and hitherto unheard of conduct of Mr James Silk Buckingham* (London, 1829), *passim*

⁹³ *The Sheffield Independent*, September 17, 1831

was to reply to the editor of *The Mercury*, who, as the mouthpiece of Arnot's fulminations, had threatened to prefer "criminator charges" against him in case he became a candidate Monday, September 19, precisely at twelve o'clock he was at the Sheffield Town Hall to receive "any challenge, accusation, or criminal charge" which the editor or others might make against him The Town Hall was crowded, the excitement was great, but the editor did not appear He had declined the meeting on the sensible ground that such procedure was absurd The retreat of this most active enemy gave Buckingham a chance to answer the criticisms that had been directed at him during his absence He explained his religious views and emphasized his interest in humanitarian services which found their chief supporters among dissenters, particularly the Quakers, rather than among Anglicans He described the Jameson duel as part of the struggle to secure a free press for India He exposed Arnot's duplicity how once Arnot had been his own warm admirer and the bitter enemy of the Company, and how fifteen hundred pounds of the Company's money had quite reversed his views Above all the candidate paid his respects to those who damned him as an "itinerant lecturer", certainly such a lecturer was as respectable as an editor whose only audiences were to be found in pothouses, and perhaps he was even as respectable as a bishop, who went about his diocese preaching At the end of this eloquent defence, which lasted three hours, the assembly passed a resolution clearing him of all the charges his opponents had raised Later he published a full reply to Arnot's pamphlet and also a sketch of his life ⁹⁴

This action by his supporters cleared the political atmosphere, but unfortunately the defeat of the Reform Bill by the Lords put an end to the campaign Buckingham went to Hull but held himself in readiness to return, for, when the Reform Bill was finally passed, he was to become the candidate of the requisitionists He spent the winter in Sheffield. In December he spoke for the benefit of the newly founded Mechanics' Institute, in January he departed from his usual topics to discourse on social evils, such as ignorance, slavery, intemperance, and war When spring came, he went on a tour of Northern Ireland

Sheffield, like the other newly enfranchised towns, celebrated the

⁹⁴ *Mr Buckingham's Defence of his Public and Private Character against the Atrocious Calumnies contained in a false and slanderous pamphlet*, 31, 34 47.

final passage of the Reform Bill with a holiday—"Jubilee Day"—June 18, 1832 Patriotic banners were hung out all over town, Ebenezer Elliott wrote two songs for the occasion, and a monster parade was held Three bands, the Political Union, the Friendly Societies, and delegations from the leading firms marched through the streets and about Paradise Square The town did not fail to pay its respect to that instrument of public opinion which had played such an important part in winning its franchise An effigy of Caxton and two printing presses in operation, running off Elliott's songs, were carried in the procession, and the printers raised on their most prominent banner lines from one of them

Oh pallid want! Oh labour stark!
Behold, we bring the second Ark!
The Press! the Press! the Press!

This homage to public opinion was a fitting prelude to the struggle—"that great argument"—which the town's first parliamentary election was to bring

Two days after the passage of the Reform Bill Thomas Ashe Ward announced himself He was followed at once by Samuel Bailey and John Parker And soon Buckingham was hurrying back from Ireland The four men represented the essential types of political opinion which belonged to the industrial towns, all claimed to be reformers—there was not a Tory among them—but each was a reformer with a difference

Ward, although a manufacturer, was the town's champion of liberty, President of the Political Union, interested in the various new institutions for social amelioration, and above all appreciative of the position of the workers His religious views were nonconformist "The revolutionaries," such as Ebenezer Elliott, and the violent Whigs, whose spokesman Ward was, supported him When he announced his candidacy he took a bold stand for reform, specifically for the abolition of slavery, taxes on knowledge, tithes, and the China monopoly—"Free trade will be my motto", he was in favour of the ballot and the correction of municipal abuses Extremely hopeful of success, he expected to get eight out of every ten votes ⁹⁵

Like Ward, Bailey was a business man and a reformer, but a philosopher besides His little work, *Essay on the Publication of*

⁹⁵ A B Bell, *op. cit.*, *passim*

Opinions, had won him the title, "the Hallamshire Bentham", it was looked upon by the prominent Radicals as the most useful single addition to the moral sciences since *The Wealth of Nations*. He had been one of the first English manufacturers to visit America to open business relations. He was a town trustee. Lastly he was a banker. His announcement aligned him "on the side of Liberty against Oppression, of Knowledge against Ignorance, of Economy against Extravagance, of Equity against Injustice"—a platform delightfully up-to-date in its generalities. By and large, except for his intellectualism—which was nevertheless in harmony with his interests—Bailey was a typical middle-class capitalist of the variety that becomes, at least in the United States of America, the trustee of charitable institutions and a monument in a municipal park. He lived a life of "clockwork regularity" and compromised his religious views, which were deistic, by attending the Established Church. As might have been expected of such a man, his firm was in "bad odour" with the workers. A "Bailey Club" was formed to advance his political interests.⁹⁶

The third candidate, young John Parker, was a lawyer and a product of the town's officialdom. His father had been chief magistrate for thirty years. The son had been educated at Oxford and was, of course, staunch in the Anglican faith. Young John had attracted attention by his good work in convincing the parliamentary supporters of the Reform Bill that Sheffield should be given representation. He described himself to the constituency as "a reformer since his youth" and assured it that "the spirit of the reform bill must not sleep" "Your commercial prosperity will be my polar star." His promises were vague enough—to work for the "public good" and to make it "one perfect whole." His supporters came from the old and wealthy families and, as Sheffield's *Figaro* mocked, from his father's debtors. During the campaign his meetings became notorious for hilarious conviviality.⁹⁷

On Monday, July 2, Ward, Bailey, and Parker held public meetings in Paradise Square. Two days later Buckingham arrived from Belfast and was received with great popular acclaim, hundreds going out along the Manchester Road to greet him. After his arrival he spoke to a large gathering from a window of Angel Inn, and

⁹⁶ A. B. Bell, *op. cit.*, 3, William H. Wickwar, *The Struggle for the Freedom of the Press, 1819-1832* (London, 1928), 246, *The Sheffield Independent*, June 16, 1832.

⁹⁷ *The Sheffield Independent*, June 16, 1832.

next evening he had a public meeting All day long bells rang merrily, and people stood around wishing that the weather would keep fine About half-past five a great number of his partisans gathered before the inn, formed three abreast into a procession, and marched into Paradise Square They wore pink rosettes, and the ladies, who filled the windows of the houses about the Square, were gay with ribbons of the same colour The assembly was so great, *The Independent* recorded, that respectable people could not get near the speaker Through the long English evening the crowd, charmed by the speaker's eloquence, listened attentively He again answered his critics, explained his qualifications, and called upon each candidate to have printed "a candid view" of his principles He did not deny his anxiety to meet the East India Company on the floor of the Commons With the same breath he frankly admitted that he was willing to accept a government appointment, perhaps as a member of a board for colonial affairs In these personal desires he could see no crimes against Sheffield Questioners in the crowd drew answers which placed him on record against the continuation of tithes and military flogging and in favour of the ballot, shorter Parliaments, and game law reform Finally he assured his hearers that he would serve the city well "When the day of actual contest comes, whoever may shrink from their pledges or their duties, I will be found faithful at my post" Such a protestation would lead one to believe that he was going to fight Mediterranean pirates again, perhaps he felt as if some of those whom he might be called upon to fight were worse than the pirates At the close of the meeting the crowd gave him "three cheers and one cheer more"⁹⁸

Buckingham was the most popular of the four candidates His printed speeches were hawked about the streets, and one could buy a small bust of him for a shilling His free-trade ideas and the imperialistic tone of his speeches pleased the moneyed-interest He also had the enthusiastic support of the workers, as Ward said, his style of oratory "captivated the ears of the groundlings" But there were better reasons for his popularity than his ability as a speaker He had beaten his detractors in an open fight, and there was no doubt about what he stood for⁹⁹

⁹⁸ *The Sheffield Independent*, June 23, July 7, 1832, *The Sheffield Iris*, July 10, 1832

⁹⁹ John Holland and James Everett, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of James Montgomery* (5 vols., London, 1856), I, 3, A B Bell, *op. cit.*, 300, *The Sheffield Iris*, September 6, 1831

In his original speech in August, 1831, he had discussed representation, taxation, church and legal reform, and education, emphasizing that the reform in representation was only a means to an end, and, if that end were not quickly attained, still further political change would be in order. Later in the same year, in order to explain the details of his ideas, he published a pamphlet, *Outlines of a New Budget for Raising Eighty Millions by Means of a Justly Graduated Tax With Suggestions on the Representative System, the National Debt, &, &, & Prepared for the Consideration of The Reformed Parliament of England*. The core of his scheme—"Taxation on Rank"—was a graduated property tax which involved a complete reorganization of the English nobility. Titles were to be based on wealth with a corresponding tax. All persons with incomes of one hundred thousand pounds were to pay an annual tax of thirty thousand pounds and to receive the title of duke, at the bottom of the scale was the free artisan possessing an income of fifty pounds and paying one-tenth as a tax. He attacked the English order of hereditary distinctions, comparing it unfavourably with the Indian caste system, and argued that in his scheme ranks, although based on wealth (which after all was something vital in the life of the nation), were relative to the amount the holder gave away. The prime result of this reform in the taxation was to be a complete relief for the poor from the burden of the state. Undoubtedly there was much nonsense in all this, but other men were being quite as silly. Southey's proposal to sell the representation of all the boroughs in order to raise a fund for national relief was certainly no more wise or practical. And what can be said for Robert Owen's plan to found a perfect society in Texas? In Cobbett's vein, imagine that in Texas! And Cobbett was trying to introduce American corn bread into England. It must be remembered that the 'twenties was an age of wonders. The pamphlet also advocated the ballot, the payment of members of Parliament, the abolition of slavery, public education, the sale of church and crown lands, free trade, self-government for the colonies, and world peace.¹⁰⁰

For purposes of the campaign he drew his ideas together into a platform, and, as an example of what the people of one of England's

¹⁰⁰ *Outlines of a New Budget for Raising Eighty Millions by Means of a Justly Graduated Tax With Suggestions on the Representative System, the National Debt, &, &, & Prepared for the Consideration of The Reformed Parliament of England, passim*

new industrial towns enthusiastically supported, it has more than passing interest

- 1 The removal of all restrictions on our Commerce with every country on the globe, and the consequent abolition of the East India and every other Monopoly
- 2 The immediate and entire extinction of Slavery, in every part of the British Dominion
- 3 The reduction of Public Expenditure, and the complete revision of the System of Taxation.
- 4 The Reform of the Church, and the speedy extinction of Tithes
- 5 The Repeal of the Corn Bill and the securing of Cheap Food
- 6 The Reform of the Laws, so as to make Justice speedy and cheap
- 7 The securing of Education at the National Cost, for all who are too poor to procure it otherwise
- 8 The abolition of the punishment of death, and of flogging, and all other corporeal punishments, both in the Army and Navy
- 9 The removal of all existing disabilities on account of religious opinions
- 10 The shortening of Parliament to three years at most
- 11 The extension of Suffrage in proportion to the spread of Education
- 12 The Vote by Ballot, as essential to purity and independence of election
- 13 The removal of the burthens that press so heavily on the poor and generally, the promotion of the interests of the many, as of more importance than the interests of the few¹⁰¹

The final explanation of his popularity was twofold. On the one hand Sheffield's Radical element, which had been notable since the 1790's, discovered in him its most eloquent advocate, he was the heir of the town's democratic tradition. On the other hand was his sincerity, he believed in his ideas, though he had good cause to regret having spoken some of them, and his followers never had occasion to feel that their faith had been misplaced. In a concluding paragraph to the *Outlines of a New Budget* he announced, "I feel myself to be physically and muscularly, as mentally and spiritually, a REFORMER"¹⁰² The boy St George of Flushing had become a man, and now he was bent on slaying not one dragon, but that whole nest of dragons which were the evils of an aristocratic

¹⁰¹ *The Poll Book containing a correct list of the Electors who Polled, distinguishing the Candidates for whom they voted, also the names of the Registered Voters who did not poll in the first Election of Members for the Borough of Sheffield Dec 13 and 14, 1832 (Sheffield, 1833), 32*

¹⁰² *Outlines of a New Budget*, 49

government and an industrial society He was "Lord Hum"—spurred, mounted, and poised—ready for battle

And it was this enthusiasm for reform which excited his strongest opposition *The Mercury* saw him as a typical example of the sort of candidates who had appeared in the newly enfranchised towns and forecast a period of political confusion and popular discontent if he and his type were successful

There is scarcely a large newly enfranchised Borough in the kingdom, for which some political declaimer is not putting himself forward, and disturbing the community Should these adventurers succeed even partially, we shall have for a time—and only for a time we hope—such a House of Commons as never before disgraced the country They get up a list of pledges to which no honest and intelligent man would subscribe, and make these pledges a test for his fitness

To adjust all interests—to distribute equitably the burdens of the nation without being partial or unjust—to extricate the country out of its difficulties at once and forever, is to them quite certain provided only, they are sent to parliament and allowed to apply some favourite nostrums They curry favour with the mob, and wheedle the poor creatures out of their peace, by promising to take all taxes off their shoulders, to place them upon their opponents, and introduce their credulous followers into a second Eden¹⁰⁸

The Mercury's fears were quite groundless, for, as the election turned out, there were more than a few in the new House ready to play the rôle of the second serpent

Buckingham's speech in Paradise Square opened the campaign in full blast His committee, headed by Henry Vickers and William Ibbotson, hired the Music Hall and invited all the electors to hear its candidate He spoke to eight consecutive meetings, about five hundred persons, including ladies, attended each evening That he lectured *gratis* amazed his enemies Someone—probably a Methodist—attacked Bailey for not believing in scriptural miracles, and Buckingham was denounced because he had once spoken for the benefit of a Unitarian fund Rumour had it that Ward was opposed to the abolition of slavery Parker's committee enjoyed its meetings and kept very late hours What a contrast to Buckingham's fashionable assemblies! An agent of the East India Company—a Scotsman—arrived in town To the astonishment of the sober citizenry, the non-electors held an orderly and attentive meeting and adopted resolutions in favour of Buckingham and Ward Then the cholera

¹⁰⁸ *The Sheffield Mercury*, August 25, 1832.

broke out, the town was panic-stricken, and the campaign was abandoned. From July to November the disease claimed four hundred and two victims.¹⁰⁴

Electioneering began again the first week in December. Buckingham returned from Bolton where he had been speaking for Colonel Robert Torrens, another ardent free trader. On December 7 the non-electors again met and called upon the electors to support Buckingham and Ward. They opposed Parker on the ground that he was a special pleader who, following the "quibble and quirk" practices of his profession, would squirm out of his pledges. This activity of the non-voting workers—"the apron-men"—was a notable feature of the campaign. They were uncouth and uneducated, but at the same time they were sharp-witted and vigorous-minded. Unfortunately they could not vote, as Ward sorrowfully recorded, they could "bark" but not "bite." The supporters of the abolition of slavery also held a meeting to secure pledges from the candidates. They received Buckingham with cheers. As the finale of his campaign, his committee sent a circular to each elector. He went into the poll with odds twelve to one in his favour, and Ward was singled out as the man whom he would have to beat. Parker's connections seemed to assure him of a place.¹⁰⁵

At last nomination day—Wednesday, December 12—came, and the candidates were to stand before the electors for a choice. Hustings were in place opposite the Corn Exchange in Haymarket Street, and business was suspended. Very early in the morning the colours of the candidates appeared in the streets—yellow for Ward, orange for Parker, green for Bailey, and pink for Buckingham. About eight o'clock some two thousand "pinks" assembled in Paradise Square, where they were met by Buckingham and part of his committee. At half-past the hour they moved in procession down Bank Street to the bottom of Angel Street where they were joined by a volunteer band. The parade then reorganized and, headed by carriages—Buckingham, Vickers, and Ibbotson in the first, Mrs. Buckingham and other ladies in the second, the remainder of the committee in several others—which were followed by the

¹⁰⁴ *The Sheffield Iris*, June 19 and July 17, 1832, *The Sheffield Independent*, July 17, 21, and 28, August 4, and September 29, 1832, Alfred Gatty, *Sheffield Past and Present* (Sheffield, 1873), 239.

¹⁰⁵ *The Sheffield Iris*, December 4 and 11, 1832, *The Sheffield Independent*, December 8, 1832, A. B. Bell, *op. cit.*, 299-301, A. Gatty, *op. cit.*, 241, J. A. Hunter, *op. cit.*, 178.

band and the marchers carrying pink banners, moved through the chief streets of the town. Meanwhile another crowd of "pinks" gathered in Paradise Square and took the nearest route to the Corn Exchange. On Market Street they merged with the main procession, which, with bands playing and flags waving, swung into Haymarket and up to the hustings. Parker's, Bailey's, and Ward's followers had already arrived, twenty-five thousand people were awaiting the candidates.¹⁰⁶

At ten o'clock the Master Cutler, Thomas Dunn, Esq., read the order of election and the act against bribery and corruption. Following these formalities, the candidates were presented. Each took the oath that he was qualified for Parliament and made a speech. Parker was received with mingled applause, groans, and hisses. Hearty cheers greeted Bailey, who, as under-dog, took occasion to express his determination to fight to a finish.

Now, gentlemen, I have before declared that I would go to the poll and stand a poll to the end, I now repeat that declaration. I have nailed the green flag to the mast of the good ship *Emerald*, and intend to keep up the battle to the last moment, and whether I have to contend with a gallant *74* from the dock-yard of the House of Orange, or a tight built brig from the Park, or a fast sailing Indiaman from Calcutta, I will not resign the contest while a friend stands by my side, or a plank remains above water.¹⁰⁷

Ward was announced amidst considerable confusion. The appearance of Buckingham was the signal for general cheering. In the course of his speech he answered questions from the crowd on the repeal of the malt tax, the vote by ballot, the abolition of flogging, the reduction of the army, and the limitation of hours of labour for children in the factories all of which he favoured. He caught up Bailey's metaphor and turned it into the oratorical flourish of the day.

In the fertility of his wit, the exuberance of his fancy, and largely creative powers of his fine imagination, Mr Bailey gave you a beautiful and happy designation of the several Candidates, as ships of different classes and kinds. In the first place he mentioned "a man of war, from the dock-yards of the House of Orange," "a tight little brig from Sheffield Park," "and the fast-sailing East Indiaman from Calcutta." Now, although I do not pretend to be an oracle of naval metaphor, yet I

¹⁰⁶ *The Sheffield Independent*, December 15, 1832, *The Poll Book 1832*, 15.

¹⁰⁷ *The Poll Book 1832*, 25

think you will give me credit for possessing a sufficient knowledge of salt water affairs to explain this In the first place then, "a man of war" is generally employed for intimidation or force, and I think you will admit that is a very proper designation for Mr Parker, as a man of war is generally supposed to carry a great weight of metal, and is therefore well calculated to represent the monied interests of the town He next spoke of "a tight little brig from Sheffield Park," which was probably spoken without considering the full extent and meaning of the expression, for when the oracles of old were inspired, they often spoke what they did not understand themselves, though it was understood by others, and modern oracles may sometimes do the same, "tight little brig," then, is one that will never spring a leak and will stand all weathers and all storms, which is in no danger of being foundered or shipwrecked, and perhaps Mr Ward may yet prove the truth and force of this designation given to his little vessel Mr Bailey next honours me with a designation of which I am more proud than all the rest, and for which I return my most hearty thanks, that of "the fast-sailing East Indiaman of Calcutta" Yes, Sirs, they have found that I have sailed too fast for them already And, by and by, they will find that my fast-sailing qualities will place me higher upon the poll, than the man of war with all her heavy metal, may now think possible But there is something more in a fast-sailing East Indiaman An East Indiaman, you know, generally carries the richest freight of all the ships that navigate the seas, and with fast-sailing thus combined, a cargo of a rich and varied kind I only hope that I may be found to possess this happy combination, and then, I need not fear the issue The honourable gentleman, however, did not designate himself, and therefore I will take the liberty to supply this slight omission, by furnishing a maritime comparison for him, also, and rate him in his proper class of shipping I consider Mr Bailey, then, to resemble a steam vessel of the most approved model, with all the machinery perfect and in good order—but the engine kept at too low a pressure The steam is too difficult to be got up—there is want of fire, and although when the weather is fine and the water smooth, and the bright sunshine cheers the sky, he would make a good cruiser on rivers and smooth waters—yet, bring him out into the boisterous ocean—set him to sail upon the sea of strife and contention—bring the chilling night air to bear upon his frame as well as the day, and he would be utterly lost in the conflict¹⁰⁸

Cheers punctuated this sparkling answer, and laughter greeted its ending.

With the speeches over, the Master Cutler called for a show of hands by the supporters of the candidates For Parker there was "a very inconsiderable number" Bailey drew "a trifle more" Fifteen thousand were raised for Ward For Buckingham there

¹⁰⁸ *The Poll Book 1832*, 33

appeared "a forest of hands," which produced among those on the hustings "a singular and almost indescribable effect" The Master Cutler then announced that Buckingham and Ward were the choice of the electors When both Parker and Bailey, as was their right, demanded a poll, the crowd became angry, but there was no disorder¹⁰⁹

In the nominations every man's hand counted, but only the thirty-five-hundred-odd qualified electors were to take part in the poll Each had the right either to vote for two men or to cast a single vote, known as a "plumper," for one man, thus withholding his support from all other candidates The Reform Bill had set December 13 and 14 for the poll

By eleven o'clock Thursday morning large parties in favour of Buckingham had gathered about the five polling places, and the voting was brisk During the afternoon supporters of Ward and Buckingham began to annoy the friends of their opponents, but no actual breaches of the peace occurred At the end of the day each candidate appeared on the hustings for ten minutes Ward expressed the hope that he would beat the "Gallant Indianaman" Bailey denied that his health was bad Both Parker and Buckingham were tired and hoarse At the close of the meeting a small group violently criticized Parker When Buckingham got into his carriage to drive to the Angel Inn, his enthusiastic admirers unhitched the horses and drew him through the streets He objected, telling them that he wished not to degrade man but to elevate him¹¹⁰

On Friday the friends of the candidates were at work an hour before the polls opened, and the voting was accompanied with more excitement than on the previous day Many of the voters were driven up in carriages, to be received with shouts or hisses, depending upon the colours they displayed Some of the most respectable citizens, whom the non-electors expected to vote against the popular candidates, were roughly handled, and not a few had their clothing torn Stones were thrown at the constables who tried to keep the crowds quiet Buckingham's committee was active in preserving order After two o'clock, when Ward began to fall behind, the resentment of the non-electors increased By four o'clock twenty-five thousand people were again at the Corn Exchange, all in great anxiety about the outcome and not a little disappointed at the

¹⁰⁹ *The Sheffield Independent*, December 15, 1832.

¹¹⁰ *The Poll Book 1832*, *loc cit*

failure of the candidates to appear again As the Master Cutler announced the results of the count, the indignation of the crowd became sharpened like the edge of a Sheffield blade The unpopular Parker stood at the head of the poll with 1,515 votes Buckingham was close behind with 1,498, of which 428 were "plumpers"—he had more than any other candidate Ward was defeated, having received only 1,210 votes, while Bailey came in a poor fourth, four hundred behind Ward ¹¹¹

Unfortunately Parker and his committee did not have sense enough to placate the crowd by quietly withdrawing from sight, but instead, as had been their custom during the campaign, they went to the Tontine Inn on Paradise Square to celebrate When their cheers were heard outside in the street, a crowd gathered and answered with cries of "Shame! Shame!" Boys began to throw pebbles at the hotel, and soon the pebbles were stones By six o'clock its windows were knocked out Although the committee was somewhat disturbed, it merely closed the shutters and continued its festivities All the time the crowd increased, but most of the disorder was the work of boys who kept pebbles rattling on the shutters and walls of the Tontine The working men opposed the display of violence Shortly before seven o'clock the magistrates became thoroughly alarmed, the coroner read the riot act, a dispatch was sent to Rotherham for a military detachment, and constables paraded the streets When the constables appeared the rioting spread into other parts of the town, and the house of one of the magistrates was stoned At eight o'clock Hugh Parker, the chief magistrate and father of the despised victor, harangued the crowd, calling upon its members to disperse Meanwhile the committee had turned out the lights

The arrival of the soldiers about ten o'clock only added to the disorders Cavalry rode through the streets, and infantrymen were drawn up in the Tontine Yard Now the stones became larger, some hit the soldiers, and one laid open the head of the magistrate who had gone for them In his excitement he ordered the soldiers to fire, repeating the command three times before the captain passed it on to his men The first discharge was blank and had no effect Then five rounds of ball cartridges were fired into the crowd

¹¹¹ *The Sheffield Iris*, December 18 and 25, 1832, *The Sheffield Independent*, December 15, 1832, A B Bell, *op. cit.*, 301, William White, *History, Guide, and Description of the Borough of Sheffield* (Sheffield, 1845), 83

When the firing ceased, the crowd was gone, many lay wounded, and five—two fourteen-year-old boys and three men—were dead. Later one of the wounded men died. The soldiers had done their work, and “the town assumed its midnight tranquillity”¹¹²

In the aftermath of the tragedy Parker published a letter to the non-electors, grieving that he had no pleasure in his success while their hearts were embittered against him. *Figaro* explained that since he had thrown nonsense at them, it was only a fair exchange when they threw dirt on him. Due to the state of public feeling, Buckingham gave up any idea of a public celebration. He also wrote a letter to the non-electors, expressing his anxious desire for the immediate extension of the suffrage. With a farewell pronouncement, “I wish to see ALL men free and happy,” he left for London and England’s First Reformed Parliament. The coroner reported a verdict of “justifiable homicide”¹¹³

¹¹² On the riot see *The Sheffield Iris*, December 25, 1832, *The Sheffield Independent*, December 15 and 22, 1832, A. B. Bell, *op. cit.*, 301, William White, *op. cit.*, 66, A. Gatty, *op. cit.*, 249, *The Poll Book 1832*, 37

¹¹³ *The Sheffield Iris*, December 18 and 25, 1832, *The Sheffield Independent*, December 22 and 25, 1832

CHAPTER V

WHIGGERY AND QUACKERY

I. THE OPENING OF THE FIRST REFORMED PARLIAMENT

ABOUT noon Tuesday, January 29, 1833, the members of the First Reformed Parliament began to gather in St Stephens, and by two o'clock four hundred or more were present. The veterans greeted each other with hearty handshakes and passed comments on their new colleagues, "Bless me, what a number of new faces," "How fresh and rosy the *new* country gentlemen look," and "You can tell the fledglings by their awkwardness." The fledglings contented themselves with formal introductions and silent wonder. All but Cobbett. He came in, garbed in a salt-and-pepper suit and wearing a wide-brimmed white hat, the symbol of Radicalism in the troublesome time of the Six Acts, and took a seat beside Lord Althorp on the treasury bench. Before the day was over he moved near John Cam Hobhouse, and before the session ended he crowded Peel out of his seat on the opposition side of the House. A Highland Scot in clan regalia also occupied a front bench. Buckingham came down early to put a placard on the seat he meant to take on one of the cross benches where independent members sat. Others who came early went for refreshments to "Bellamy's Gutting and Guzzling Works," as the revolutionary *Poor Man's Guardian* called the bar-room which could be reached by a passage leading directly from the floor of the House. This bar-room deserved the more appropriate designation, "the third house of parliament," for there the members found relief in conviviality from the boredom of debate and the tedium of the long delays between the crucial divisions upon which the fate of Ministers—and the nation—hung. As Buckingham waited for the beginning of business, he noted the dinginess of the hall—"a second edition of the Black Hole of Calcutta"—pondered the absurdity of excluding women from the galleries (they came disguised in trousers and large cravats), and projected several reforms for the better regulation of the assembly's business.¹

It was nearly a quarter-past two when Sir Augustus de Clifford,

¹ *The Parliamentary Review*, J. S. Buckingham, editor, I (1833), 1 *et seq.* an interesting account of the first meeting of the Reformed Parliament

"Usher of the Black Rod" (Buckingham thought the title quite appropriate for the proctor of unruly schoolboys), came to request the attendance of the members at the bar of the Lords to hear the King's commission read. Not more than a hundred members answered the summons. The House of Lords breathed "an air of indolent and lordly tranquillity." Its walls were hung with old tapestries depicting the defeat of the Armada, its floor was softly carpeted, and its benches were covered with bright crimson cloth, at the upper end of the hall was the throne, surmounted by a rich canopy and drapery of crimson and gold. And before the throne was the woolsack occupied by the King's Ministers. Lord Brougham, the Lord High Chancellor and Keeper of the King's Conscience, the Marquis of Lansdowne, President of the King's Council, Earl Grey, First Lord of the Treasury and Prime Minister of State, the Duke of Richmond, the Postmaster-General, and Lord Auckland, President of the Board of Trade. One Lord Spiritual, the Right Reverend Father in God, the Bishop of London, sat on the ministerial side of the House, among the opposition benches three Lords Temporal boo'd and baa'd, as beffitted the wintry weather. Wellington had not yet returned from the retreat of 1832. The noble and learned gentlemen on the wool-sack reminded the independent member for Sheffield of Oriental potentates, and the whole performance seemed to him like Asiatic mummery.

At the conclusion of the clerk's reading the Commoners bowed assent, and Sir Augustus de Clifford pushed them from the hall, not allowing one of them to turn his back toward the noble personages on the woolsack. The speed of the movement was so rapid that many almost fell over on their heels. James Silk thought it a happy outcome when they arrived on the floor of their own House with no necks broken and contemplated a law to abolish such foolishness.

how incomparably less *dignified* than the simple dress and commanding air and manner of the earnest senator in the House of Commons, clothed in all the glory of impassioned eloquence, robed in the majesty of truth, and crowned by the coronet of a free nation's admiration! Oh! dignity! how little are thy elements appreciated and understood!¹²

Scarcely were "the earnest senators" in their seats when Joseph Hume asked Lord Althorp whether Mr. Manners Sutton, in case he was elected Speaker of the House, was to retain his pension of four

¹² *The Parliamentary Review*, I (1833), 8.

thousand pounds The Whig leader objected that no business could be transacted until a Speaker was chosen, and Hume, keeping the floor, nominated Edward Littleton Daniel O'Connell, of "the O'Connell Brigade"—father, three sons, and two sons-in-law—and in Cobbett's sharp phrase, "the member for Ireland," seconded the nomination The Whigs supported Sutton, a Tory and the Speaker of the last House, because they thought an experienced presiding officer was necessary in a body with so many new members The veteran Radical, Sir Francis Burdett, also spoke for him, but Cobbett loosed his tongue three times in opposition, " 'So the sample is so is the sack', and a pretty sack it is to give such a sample as this " The Ministry—with Buckingham's concurrence—elected its nominee, who, except for a distinct faculty for catching the eye of the least talented Whigs and the most able Tories, justified the confidence placed in him But the Radical *True Sun* characterized him as "an enemy of the people" and saw his election as "a bad omen "

Two days later the members were sworn in, and the new House made its first show of liberal sentiments by permitting Joseph Pease, a Quaker, to take his seat on affirmation instead of by oath On the following Monday, February 5, the King rode down White-hall to tell the Parliament why it had been called together Twenty-one guns boomed out the royal salute, and well-placed knots of revolutionists broke "the sullen silence of the careless crowd" with menacing cries, "Keep your hats on," but there was no disturbance The King spoke of the magnitude of the tasks before Parliament—the renewal of the East India Company and Bank Charters, the collection and distribution of the revenues of the Church, the need for economy, and the insubordination and violence in Ireland—and urged especially the promotion of "the habits of industry and good order among the labouring classes of the community" He said nothing about their burdens Buckingham noticed that the display of feminine beauty in the House of Lords during the King's delivery was enough to excite the keepers of Oriental harems to disbelief, and Thomas Attwood of Birmingham thought that the communication might well have come from an Oriental despot for all the knowledge it showed of the central problems of English life In the Commons debate on the speech Lord Althorp warned those Radicals who asked him about the taxes on knowledge and the Corn Laws that there was great danger in trying to do too much

The London Times greeted the new Parliament with the striking

comment, "No idle sunbeams play upon our infant Hercules, he is cradled on the surge and rocked amidst the storm" *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* remarked that the storm had been fifty years brewing *The Dublin University Magazine* looked forward "to dark and undefined calamity" And Buckingham established a new paper, *The Parliamentary Review*, to record the struggles of the giant and the thunder of the tempest

2 PARTIES AND PERSONS IN 1833

Almost half the members of the new Parliament were strangers within the walls of St Stephens The lawyers were more numerous than ever, and Gully, the ex prize fighter, was there To offset these changes one hundred and eighty-eight placemen and pensioners and nearly a hundred sons of peers or their near relatives were still to be found upon the benches But there was only one "pig-tail" in the new House The bald-heads balanced the red-heads, and the two together about equalled the now ordinary Jacobin close-crops Long trousers were universal Only Sir Francis Burdett's bright blue coat kept up the eighteenth-century tradition of gay colours for gentlemen But the "earnest senators" showed a portending independence, for, in spite of the fact that George IV had set the fashion for dark colours, they went in for light-coloured "inexpressibles," as the budding Victorianism called those homely cylinders with which men are wont now to encase their legs It was a reformed and a reforming Parliament

Many estimates have been made of the strength of the different parties in the First Reformed Parliament, and Buckingham left his count to be added to the list He numbered the Whigs or "the halters" at 408, the Liberals or "the advancers" at 96, and the Conservatives or "the receders" at 150, he was unable to classify four members ³

"The receders" were those whose blind veneration for ancient institutions left them no power of perceiving any good in modern ones, James Silk admired them for their dependable consistency But Peel was too liberal for his Conservative followers, chiefly because, as Buckingham said, he had never got the cotton fuzz out of his ears

"The halters" believed that reform had gone far enough or fancied

³ *The Parliamentary Review*, I (1833), 33 *et seq.*

that by going slowly they would always be safe The bulk of the Whigs confined their parliamentary activity to enjoying each other's aristocratic society at Brooks's, cheering the speeches of the Ministers, and running into the House at every ringing of the division bell Buckingham gave Lord Althorp credit for being a skilful parliamentary leader and considered Lord Melbourne a man of some parts, although not up to Grey The Whigs, however, were not sympathetic reformers, their chief policies were a firm control over the patronage and the maintenance of public tranquillity

"The advancers"—among whom James Silk counted himself as one of the most ardent—were just as much beyond the Whigs as the Whigs were beyond the Conservatives The eyes of "the advancers" were open for every abuse, and whenever one was discovered then was the time to remedy it They were essentially democratic in their views government is a trust to be exercised for the people, the many are more important than the few, and an old institution is not *per se* a good institution They approved the Reform Bill, but it was not an end in itself, it was only the means to a rapid renovation of English institutions More and better laws was their programme Buckingham refused to be classified as a Radical In his own words, he was a "Liberal Reformer", in the words of *The Annual Register*, he was "a tried enemy of tyranny"⁴

But each of these political groups was divided in its attitudes toward general issues and specific measures The Conservatives—"feeble and faint, but fearless still"—were sulky and headless Croker had repudiated reform, Wellington refused to accept it, Peel played with the cotton fuzz in his ears and waited for the drowning man's straw, and Disraeli—defeated as a Radical in the election—had just discovered that he possessed a shapely leg The Whigs were jubilant, arrogant, and hesitant They had gone so far with reform only in order that it would never be necessary to go further, the great evil was the rage for innovation Lord Althorp, more at home with cows than with a parliamentary majority, advised moving slowly, Stanley preferred horses—swifter and more aristocratic animals—and became a Tory, Lord Melbourne reduced motion to inertia and rose to be Premier, and Parker, Buckingham's colleague from Sheffield, imitated all the Ministers and ultimately became Lord Commissioner of the Treasury

⁴ *The Parliamentary Review*, I (1833), 30 *et seq.*, V (1834), 85, *The Sheffield Iris*, September 9, 1834, *The Annual Register*, 1833, 186

The Radicals were noisy, factious, turbulent, and over-critical of one another Hume was "a teasing, biting fly", he accused Cobbett of being "no friend of capital" Burdett was almost a Tory, he despised Place, who had refused to become a contestant for a seat. And Grote would have nothing to do with the shocking notions which Roebuck published in his penny pamphlet, *Politics for the People* Thomas Attwood, the Birmingham banker, was "cracked" on currency reform John Cam Hobhouse was "changeable" Duncombe was "a handy man at odd jobs" Harvey had "too little money to be trusted" And Buckingham was a "quack"

Beside these strong cross-currents there were powerful eddies in the new Commons "The saints"—some Tories, some Whigs, and some Radicals, all dashed with a bit of Methodist fervour or Quaker earnestness—supported the abolition of slavery, brought in temperance petitions, and attempted to stop the new railroads from operating on Sunday "The Irish mountain" was a violent and eruptive volcano, the O'Connells, O'Dwyer, and Sheil were always ready for any foray that would embarrass the Ministers or expose an English injustice in Ireland And over all hovered the ghost of Jeremy Bentham he had died in 1832 That fusion of Benthamism and political economy which produced the true Philosophical Radicals—Hume, Grote, Roebuck, Molesworth, and Buller—was more powerful outside the Commons than in the divisions The Ministers leaned heavily on Bentham's disciples for advice, seeding the royal commissions with such men as Edwin Chadwick, Walter Coulson, Joseph Parkes, John Blackburne, and Southwood Smith And at the Home Office Nassau Senior, fresh from a five-year professorship of political economy at Oxford, advised Lord Melbourne on such delicate topics as the suppression of trades unions

To complete the discord in governmental circles, the Whig leaders in the Lords—Grey, Brougham, Richmond, and Durham—were at odds with one another Moreover the King soon came to despise the Ministers, "I would rather see the Devil than any of them in my house" Quite as disconcerting was the appearance of a Tory antagonism to the monarch Croker objected to his spitting out of the window of the state coach

Beyond Parliament and the politicians the country also seethed with controversial opinions There was no unanimity of feeling toward the new Parliament itself The Tories were terrified at the prospect before them. *The Dublin University Magazine* notified its

readers to prepare for action by the lower classes against the upper classes. Strangely enough these dark forebodings found their parallels in the fulminations of the working-class sheets. On the last day of the poll *The Poor Man's Guardian*, which had protested against the Reform Bill as "a most hellish measure," took occasion to warn the working people that they need expect nothing from "the Shopocrats"

To *bleed* in time of war, to *toil* and *starve* in time of peace, to be *caressed* in the hour of victory, and to be *trampled* into the dust after they have laid down their arms, these are the parts assigned to the "LOWER ORDERS" in all the dramatism of human life⁵

That *The Guardian's* prophecy was on its way to fulfilment was well indicated when *The London Times* for the day the new Parliament assembled gave out that the large commercial constituencies had recommended taking up only one or two measures during the session

But the pessimistic views were in a minority. The thousands who clustered around the polls in those December days of 1832 had high hopes, indeed extravagant hopes. *The Sheffield Iris* voiced the general anticipation in its fore-praise of the new House of Commons "Justice will be conspicuous in all its decisions, wisdom in all its deliberations, and patriotism in all its acts." It was to be "the most glorious elective body the world ever saw," and in *The Iris's* opinion Buckingham would help make it so

The non-voting "apron-men," who stood before the Sheffield hustings and pledged their support to Buckingham, exemplified the revolution which the rise of public opinion had brought about. By 1833 the English masses were articulate, moreover, under the impulse of those social forces which the factory system and the rising industrial cities were generating, they were becoming alive to their class identity and interest. Those expectant hopes were now oriented not only about political rights but also about economic demands the rights of man had a new reading, "Liberty, Equality, Security, and the full enjoyment of the produce of his labour."⁶ Owenism was at its height. From the failure of his American experiment its prophet had returned to found co-operative societies and labour exchange bazaars in a bold effort at achieving in the tangled web of English society what had proved impracticable in the wilderness of Indiana. Even more vigorous than the Owenite movement were

⁵ *The Poor Man's Guardian*, December 15, 1832

⁶ *Place Manuscripts*, 27797, 12

the trades unions Between 1825, when the statutory prohibitions on combinations for the purpose of raising wages and shortening hours were repealed, and 1833 every trade and craft in the country, it was complained, had organized, even the washerwomen of Kensington. Strikes were common, and the general strike was mooted, its proponents called for "a grand national holiday."

There was also a new radicalism in the air, lacking the sentimental glow of Owenism, it spoke a language which the twentieth-century Left Wing can understand. Capitalistic industrialism was "a barbarous system of savagery," and the middle class was the maker of slavery in all its forms. Nothing was equal to the injustice of property men but their folly. There must be a "house of Trades" in the national legislature, and "labour" must sit on the treasury bench "When the labourer knows his wrongs, the death-knell of the capitalist has been sounded." These ideas came to the people chiefly in the columns of *The Poor Man's Guardian* and *The Pioneer*.

In 1833 the lower-class movements were at flood-tide the Whig leaders had been able instructors in the arts of agitation, having appealed to large meetings and having taught the people to use violence and to refuse to pay taxes. Lord Eldon, the old Tory, declared that such conduct was treason and complained that the crime was not treated the way it used to be. As a matter of fact, the Ministers found it impossible to convict any one for the murder of a policeman who had tried to break up a London mass meeting. It was little wonder, then, that the King spoke to the new Parliament about promoting the habits of industry and good order among the labouring classes but said nothing about their miseries. As *The True Sun* observed, "The heroism of the poor is a very unromantic and unpicturesque thing."

Buckingham's pledges to the Sheffield electors indicated the problems that were to come before the new Parliament—the China trade, slavery, taxation, the Church, the ballot, education, the factories, and the colonies. These were the issues which the development of opinion since the 1790's had brought, and the action of the Parliament was to reflect clearly the state of the national convictions.

But the first question, after the choice of the Speaker, which came before the House was one of procedure. There were so many petitions, motions, and orators that a way to expedite business had to be found. Ominously, some thought, the practice of the Long Parliament in receiving petitions was adopted. Buckingham made his maiden

speech in advocating a measure for limiting debate Citing the practice of the French Chamber of Deputies, he proposed that all members who desired to speak on a motion should list their names with the Speaker, take the floor in the order of the names on the list, and, except the original maker of the motion, be limited to twenty minutes.⁷ His scheme was greeted with ridicule The House was too traditionally minded to accept such a stringent restriction of its right to talk Not until fifty years later did the Commons bring itself to adopt any sort of a closure rule The arrogant Whig majority persisted in the old and less business-like but quite effective practice of "howling down" unpopular speakers It was not the new members who shocked the country with disorderly conduct As Buckingham said, "Everything out of the beaten track, and that betokened either spirit or originality was met by the plodding or slow-moving members by cries of 'Oh, Oh,' and tones of horror."⁸ Cobbett stormed at the "Kiddadids," who began their noise at sunset and kept it up till sunrise, even Peel was displeased with the "indecent clamours" which marked each night's debate Conservative noblemen, like Lord Ebrington, were allowed to talk nonsense by the hour, but only a miracle allowed the Radical Grote to speak on the ballot

The full force of the Whig prejudice against innovators fell upon Buckingham⁹ His too conversational style of speaking, his too frank discussions of proceedings of the House in his *Parliamentary Review*, and his too persistent pressing of his claims against the East India Company combined to make him unpopular, and besides he was a "Liberal Reformer," which meant "quack" to those who, like his colleague, Parker, kept to "the neutral space where an equilibrium is preserved between two extremes" What happened when he rose to speak can be judged from the following report of a "howling down"

I rise, Sir (Ironical cheers, mingled with all sorts of zoological sounds), I rise, Sir, for the purpose of stating that I have ('Oh! oh!' 'Bah!' and sounds resembling the bleating of a sheep, mingled with loud laughter) Hon Gentlemen may endeavour to put me down by their unmannerly interruptions, but I have a duty to

⁷ *Parliamentary Debates*, XV (1833), 1010, see also *The Parliamentary Review*, I (1833), 149, 201, 297

⁸ *The Parliamentary Review*, I (1833), 192

⁹ *Chapters in the Political History of Sheffield 1833-1849 Consisting of Letters from Mr John Parker M P and Mr George Ward M P* (Sheffield 1884), 6, *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, I (1833), 414

perform to my con—(Ironical cheers, loud coughing, sneezing and yawning extended to an incredible length, followed by bursts of laughter) I say, Sir, I have constituents who on this occasion expect that I—(Cries of 'Should sit down,' and shouts of laughter) They expect, Sir, that on a question of such importance ('O-o-a-a-u' and loud laughter, followed by cries of 'Order! order!' from the Speaker) I tell honourable gentlemen who choose to conduct themselves in such a way, that I am not to be put down by—(Groans, coughs, sneezings, hems, and various animal sounds, some of which closely imitated the yelping of a dog, and the squeaking of a pig, interspersed with peals of laughter) I appeal—('Cock-e-leeri-o-co') the imitation, in this case, of the crowing of a cock was so remarkably good, that not even the most staid and orderly members in the house could preserve their gravity The laughter which followed drowned the Speaker's cries of ('Order! order!') I say, Sir, this is most unbecoming conduct on the part of an assembly calling itself de—('Mew-mew,' and renewed laughter) Sir, I claim the protection of the chair (The Speaker here again rose and called out, 'Order! order!' in a loud and angry tone, on which the uproar in some measure subsided) If honourable gentlemen will only allow me to make one observation, I will not trespass further on their attention, but sit down at once (This was followed by the most tremendous cheering in earnest) I only beg to say, Sir, that I think this is a most dangerous and unconstitutional measure, and will therefore vote against it¹⁰

A scene such as this occurred early in the session of 1833 when Buckingham attempted to speak on the Irish Coercion Bill, he met the clamour with a motion to adjourn, which he refused to withdraw until he was given the floor¹¹ Later in the session after he had discussed the bill to abolish slavery, Lord Stanley complimented him for having followed the salutary principle which he had laid down as to the length of speeches Outside observers credited him with being one of the best speakers in the new House¹²

Buckingham's friends in Sheffield were not dismayed by the reception he received A correspondent of *Figaro* encouraged him to persist, "We have too much aristocracy, Sir, in both Houses of Parliament. You must represent a different order of the community," and explained the hostility toward him as a result of his publishing *The Parliamentary Review*¹³ This paper gave a running comment on the speeches of the various members, exposed the conduct of the Ministers, and explained his own opinions and votes, it "anticipated

¹⁰ James Grant, *Random Recollections of the House of Commons* (London, 1835), 77 *et seq* ¹¹ *The Parliamentary Review*, I (1833), 275 *et seq*

¹² *Ibid*, II (1833), 532, James Grant, *op. cit.*, 338

¹³ *Figaro*, I (1833), 204

by many years a feature of modern journalism that has only been developed by the then unknown science of telegraphy"¹⁴ *Tart's Edinburgh Magazine* recommended it to all political unions and clubs of reformers¹⁵

By these editorial labours Buckingham supported his family and at the same time attended to the nation's business. He added to his income by lecturing between sessions, a practice which brought down upon him still more criticism, both in and out of the House. He defended himself by declaring that it was no worse for him to speak a book than for Bulwer to write one, and that he had as much right to go about giving lectures as had Sir James Scarlett to travel around pleading cases¹⁶ Inasmuch as the Commons refused to prohibit its members from taking fees for advocating private issues before its own committees, this objection to his lecturing was only so much snobbish cant. Meanwhile he learned that family relationship played a great part in political arrangements and that the members of the Commons were not the most sympathetic audience for a tale of wrongs.¹⁷

The storm of opinion which swept through the First Reformed Parliament and its immediate successor is well described in the effort which Buckingham made to play the rôle of a "Liberal Reformer." Upon those measures which the Whigs felt impelled by the force of public opinion to pass, he held advanced views, the proposals which he himself brought forward marked out new fields of reform, and with respect to the developing problem of industrial civilization he more nearly sensed its issues than any of his colleagues.

¹⁴ *Chapters in the Political History of Sheffield*, 4

¹⁵ *Tart's Edinburgh Magazine*, III (1833), 806

¹⁶ *The Atlas*, September 28, 1834, see *Absalom Watkins, Extracts from his Journal 1814-1896* (London, 1928), 175 "January 29th (1835) attended the meeting of the committee appointed to draw up the rules of the South Lancashire Reform Association Attended Mr Buckingham's lecture Some pages in Buckingham's 'Travels in Mesopotamia' January 30th Attended the meeting of the Club at Davies The whole Club went from Davies to Mr. Buckingham's lecture It was a good one From the ancient prosperity of Palmyra he deduced the advantages of Free Trade, and concluded by exhorting his hearers to avoid the error of antiquity, to cherish free institutions, and to extend education accompanied by "c'e' 'd' 'g' 'i' 'u' 'c', to labour to make the mass of the people happy, and *invariably* to determine to do something to preserve and increase the greatness and happiness of our great and happy country"

¹⁷ *The Parliamentary Review*, I (1833), 38, 143

3. SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR INDIA

On the day before the Commons assembled, Buckingham and Parker began their parliamentary careers by participating in a joint interview between the supporters of the abolition of slavery and Earl Grey. But the agreement in sentiment displayed on this occasion was soon disrupted, Buckingham taking a course in opposition to the Ministers and Parker becoming one of the howling Whig majority. Their complete separation was fully displayed when Buckingham brought in a petition from the Sheffield Political Union protesting against the Irish Coercion Bill. Throughout the wrangling over this measure, Buckingham voted with the Irish. He objected to the use of violence against people whose disorders arose primarily because of economic exploitation. He also believed that the employment of force in Ireland was only a prelude to its use in England. Parker, opposing the petition and urging the necessity for protecting the King's peaceful subjects from outrage, won the warm approval of "the real leaders of political opinion." Whiggery had separated from quackery.¹⁸

The abolition of slavery was an issue which had been agitated with great energy and adroitness since the eighteenth century. The mantle of Wilberforce had fallen upon Thomas Fowell Buxton, and he, with the aid of returned missionaries and numerous local anti-slavery associations, had worked arduously to pledge as many of the candidates for the Reformed Parliament as possible and to flood the Parliament with petitions. Over eleven hundred such petitions were laid before the Commons and the Lords during the 1833 session. This was an issue upon which public opinion apparently had spoken, the Whigs therefore were prepared to act.

The Grey family had long been friendly to the cause of the negro, in fact Lord Howick, the Premier's son, shared with Buxton the acclaim of the abolitionist crusaders, and besides these two, according to *The Eclectic Review*, only one other member of the new Parliament—Mr. Buckingham—showed any knowledge of the problem.¹⁹ Buxton and the Anti-Slavery Society advocated gradual emancipation by freeing the children born after a certain date, the Whigs favoured any plan that would keep up sugar production.

¹⁸ *Chapters in the Political History of Sheffield*, 3, 5, *Parliamentary Debates*, XVI (1833), 177, 400

¹⁹ *The Eclectic Review*, LVIII (1833), 320.

Howick had devised a scheme of immediate emancipation which hedged liberty about with vagrancy laws and a land tax, but the Ministry decided in favour of a measure which provided for the liberation of the slaves after a twelve-year probationary period. The bill also offered, as did Howick's plan, a temporary loan to the planters. When Lord Stanley introduced the Ministry's bill, Howick opposed it on account of the apprenticeship clause, he favoured immediate abolition.

The opponents of abolition argued with their usual logic. Lord Dalmeay said that he would as soon remove the shackles from all the inmates of the madhouses as let the slaves loose "Revenge was in their bosoms only a cold sleeping servant, let it be warmed into lie by a day of liberty and it would spring upon its victims." The old Tory, Sir Richard Vyvyan, declared that a shopkeepers' Parliament had no right to legislate for the colonies, he foresaw a revolt by the planters (that made two prospective revolts) and a sugar famine in England. The young Tory, William Ewart Gladstone, protested against Lord Howick's aspersions upon his father's plantation managers and asked, as he urged compensation, "Were not Englishmen to retain a right to their own honestly and legally acquired property?" Neither he nor others cared to remember the legality of certain operations along the West African coast. The Radical Hume depicted the horrors of life for free negroes, characterized the bill as "crude, undigested, and imperfect," and argued (Jeremy Bentham's soul was marching on), "If such experiments were tolerated no species of property would be safe from the interference of parliament." Hume advocated delay until more information could be gathered about the practicability of cultivating sugar with free labour. Peel raised even more momentous objections, namely, the natural inferiority of the negroes, their primordial laziness, and their ignorance. Eighteen hundred or more of the West India interest—"all of the highest respectability"—petitioned to be heard at the bar of the House in favour of the protection and security of colonial agriculture, and Lord Sandon moved to compensate the slave owners twenty million pounds. His amendment was carried, and in the course of the debates the Government decided to reduce the period of apprenticeship to seven years.

Buckingham played an interesting, if not an influential, part in the debates. He, as well as the Grey family, had an honourable record on slavery. Had he not refused to make money by captaining

a slaver? Had he not been for years an advocate not of gradual but of complete emancipation? He claimed to be the first public writer in England to have taken such an advanced position, and in fact he was the solitary member of Parliament in 1833 to propose immediate, full, and unconditional freedom for the negroes²⁰ Lord Howick agreed with this position, but did not go to the length of advocating it in opposition to his father's Ministry, he also favoured compensating the planters After the speeches by Hume, Peel, and Sandon, Buckingham introduced a resolution calling for complete emancipation within a year and without either compensation by the Government or the exaction of labour from the slaves as conditions upon liberation Lord Howick and the Anti-Slavery Society urged him to withdraw the motion, which he agreed to do when the Government gave up the plan of imposing self-redemption upon the negroes²¹

The speech in support of this resolution and articles in *The Parliamentary Review* disclose his arguments in favour of the justice, desirability, and safety of immediate emancipation He discounted the danger of a slave revolt after emancipation, contending that it was unnatural for men to assault their benefactors, to liberate the slaves would remove that sense of wrong which rankled in their hearts and caused frequent insurrections against their masters If the slaves were ignorant, they were no more so than the common people of Europe, who were free to sell their labour as they pleased The inferiority of the negroes was not a fact of nature but a condition of their enslavement, in countries where slavery did not exist there was no feeling against them The negroes were lazy, but so were other men were those in England who lived without labour to be compelled to go to work? The implications of this question were too delicate to be pressed in the aristocratic House of Commons He derided Hume's plea for a delay had not the issue been agitated for thirty years? He declared Peel's argument that emancipation would mean the cessation of sugar cultivation in the West Indies remarkable, considering all the political economists had said in favour of free labour And he flatly opposed Lord Sandon's resolution for compensation because the slaves were not getting their

²⁰ *The Sheffield Iris*, March 22, 1836, see also *The Oriental Herald*, IV (1825), 343

²¹ *Parliamentary Debates*, XVIII (1833), 473 *et seq.*, *The Parliamentary Review*, II (1833), 456

freedom and, furthermore, because the proponents of compensation had not proved that the slave owners were losing anything they were entitled to possess ²²

The passage of the Emancipation Act gave the Whig *Edinburgh Review* an "unspeakable satisfaction," but *The Poor Man's Guardian* observed that enough money was wasted on the planters to keep the poor of England for three years. The operation of the act provided a quick vindication for Buckingham. In Antigua immediate liberation was carried out with such success that in 1833, for the first time in twenty years, Christmas was celebrated without calling out a military force, and other islands quickly followed Antigua's lead. By 1838 Lord Brougham was arguing that the grant to the planters had been unnecessary (Gladstone held to the contrary), and in August of that year all negroes were given what Buxton called "the pure, primitive, eternal rights of man."

After the coercion of the Irish and the liberation of the negroes, the next item in the ministerial programme was the government of the Hindus, and this of course was Buckingham's special interest.

In 1830, according to the promise exacted the year before by the opponents of the China monopoly, the Tories appointed a select committee to review the East India Company's affairs. When there was some contention over the appointment of too many "Indian authorities" and not enough representatives of the manufacturing interest, Hume forced the addition of another spokesman for the latter. In 1831 and 1832 the committee was reconstituted, and from time to time it reported findings, usually without comment.

On the whole the committee was equivocal, preferring to leave to the Ministers and Parliament the task of shaping an Indian policy. The report described the anomalous structure of the Indian Government in both the English and the Indian departments but commended the Company for protecting India from invasion and for giving security to life and property. The committee urged the adaptation of the law to the feelings of the natives, even recommending that they be admitted to political positions in order to lessen the cost of administration and to strengthen their attachment to England. Six proposals for solving the problem of the Company's trading privileges were put forward: a reduction of English duties on im-

²² *Parliamentary Debates*, XIX (1833), 1069, *The Parliamentary Review* II (1833), 522 *et seq.*

tations from India, the removal of transit duties in India, the relaxation of the measures against Europeans going to India, the more efficient protection of life and property in India, the opening of the China trade, and the complete withdrawal of the Company from commercial activities. The declaration in favour of free migration was supported by evidence which went to show that licenses to reside in India were easily obtained and that lands were being held generally by Englishmen under agreements with natives. The same indecisive attitude was reflected in the recommendations with respect to the press, some witnesses and authorities, the committee reported, argued for freedom while others contended as vigorously for strict control.

When the Whigs went into office Charles Grant became President of the Board of Control and, in the famous "Paper of Hints" of December 17, 1832, communicated to the Company the Government's plans for dealing with the Indian problem. He proposed the complete cessation of the China monopoly (the Clyde was to have its Eastern bridges) and indicated the terms upon which the Company was to retain the government of India, namely, the surrender of all its properties to the Crown in return for an annuity of £ 630,000 payable semi-annually at the rate of 5½ per cent. The annuity was to be charged against the territorial revenues of India. Other stipulations touched upon the patronage, which was left in the hands of the Directors, and on the right of Englishmen to migrate to India where they were to be allowed to acquire and hold lands.

The Secret Committee replied with a firm defence of the Company's trading privileges, pointing out that these privileges were not a monopoly "in the sense that term is generally received" and enumerating the various evils that would arise if the China trade was thrown open. The cost of collecting the tea tax would increase, the quality of the tea would become inferior, there would be no expansion in the sale of English manufactured goods in China, and the existing peace between England and China would be seriously endangered. And the losses falling upon the Company as a result of its being deprived of the profit of the tea trade would involve a revolution in Indian finance, placing a heavier burden upon the natives in order to supply England with cheap tea.

The joining of the issue between the Company and the Government on the China monopoly drew from Grant a full explanation of the Cabinet's position. The opening of this trade was especially to be

desired on account of the commercial and industrial interests of the kingdom England was beset by numerous competitors, particularly America, and in the face of these circumstances "thinking and practical men" were coming to believe that the entire system of restrictive commercial regulations would have to be altered. He did not expect any prodigious increase as a result of opening the China trade, but he thought it absurd to contend that there would be no expansion at all. He also argued that "competition" would both improve the quality and lessen the price of tea. As for broils with the Chinese, they could be handled through diplomatic channels. When the Secret Committee replied, pointing out the increase in the Company's debt that would occur if the profits of the tea trade were lost, he asserted flatly that India must no longer be a financial burden on England.

Then the Government's proposal came up for consideration in the Court of the Directors. Sir John Malcolm introduced resolutions approving the separation of the Company's commercial and political activities and declaring the Company's sole object to be the advancement of the happiness and prosperity of its Indian subjects, and a heated debate started. That opposition which had defeated Buckingham's claims for compensation spoke its mind in defence of the Company. Randle Jackson, long a legal adviser of the Company, pointed out that one of the first acts of the French Revolution was to put down the French East India Company. Another member argued that the Company ought not to commit suicide, another asked how strangers could carry on the trade with China as well as a Company which had two hundred years' experience, and still another demanded that the Directors remember the widows and orphans who were dependent on the Company for incomes. Even Sir Charles Forbes, who had supported Buckingham's claims, opposed the abolition of the monopoly, but on more interesting grounds. He described "what were called the manufacturing towns of England" as "places rising up, almost every hour, and falling off with equal rapidity" and urged that to open the China trade would only make the evils of industrialism worse. Last but not least, the Reverend Samuel James Bryce appeared in order to depict the dangers which a free press had raised against British power in India and to decry the growth of atheism among the natives. The single speaker who attempted to detail the evils of the Company's administration—how the natives were denied justice in the courts, how they were taxed

excessively, and how they were beaten on the roads—was cried down. *The London Times* characterized the tone of the Company's orators as one of "high insolence" In the end the resolutions were carried by a vote of 477 to 52, besides declaring in favour of a fund to redeem the annuity, the resolutions approved of the abolition of the China monopoly on the grounds that it would promote the best interests of the Empire²⁸

Although the Company agreed to the Government's plan in April, the bill for the renewal of the Charter was not introduced until June 13, when Grant brought in three resolutions which embodied the Cabinet's proposals The first resolution declared the opening of the China trade, the second provided for the transfer of the Company's property to the Crown in return for such a sum as Parliament might determine, and the third continued the Company's rule under such conditions and regulations as Parliament might enact for the purpose of extending the commerce of England and promoting the moral and religious improvement of the people of India In addition to abolishing the China trade, the bill opened the political and military services of the Indian Government to the natives, raised the Governor-General of Bengal to supreme authority over the Indian establishment, and, besides reconstructing the Supreme Council by adding a "law member," extended its legislative powers The financial settlement was carried out along the original lines proposed by the Government a fund of two million pounds was set aside to accumulate until it amounted to twelve millions, when it was to be used to redeem the annuity The right to migrate to India and to acquire and hold lands was granted to all his Majesty's subjects Both the Board of Control and the Court of Directors were to have authority to recall Indian functionaries The Charter was extended for twenty years

Among all the great measures considered by the First Reformed Parliament, none was viewed with such unanimity as this India bill Except for Ellenborough, who objected to the admission of natives to political offices, and Wellington, who desired the continuation of the Company's trade, there was no opposition to the Government's measure, none but that from the independent member for Sheffield, who, in spite of a "commanding presence and fluent eloquence," was

²⁸ *The Asiatic Journal*, new series, XI (1833), 23 *et seq.*, 62 *et seq.*, 168 *et seq.*, 207, *The London Times*, April 27, 1833, *Parliamentary Papers*, XXV (1833), *Further Papers respecting the East India Company's Charter*, 11, 15

powerless to alter its course ²⁴ In addition to brief remarks in support of the motion for the abolition of the salt monopoly, Buckingham spoke three times against the Ministry first when Grant introduced the three resolutions, again on the second reading of the bill, and finally on the third reading For the Government Grant and Macaulay carried the burden, Wynn and Fergusson, Buckingham's attorney in Calcutta, spoke for the Company

Buckingham's opposition was not directed toward the clauses which abolished the China trade and permitted Englishmen to go out to India, as he said in *The Parliamentary Review*, he had been an advocate of these measures for twenty years He found the defects of the bill in those parts which dealt with the Government of India ²⁵

When Grant introduced the resolutions he admitted the existence of evils in the Indian establishment, particularly in the judicial and financial systems, but insisted that there had been great improvements during the last forty years For this reason he justified the continuation of a government whose anomalous structure he fully appreciated Fergusson boasted that the Company was giving up its trade in order that the blessings of its rule might be continued

To these optimistic views Buckingham offered a "direct negative" He protested that "the system of English rule had reduced the natives to a state, not merely of poverty, but of misery the most abject, in which they were doomed to continue in worse than Egyptian bondage, without a hope of any other deliverance than the grave" The natives existed for no other purpose than to be used as instruments of production He named Mill, Rickards, Munro, even Macaulay as authorities supporting his contention that India had declined in wealth and that the burden of taxation was excessive The public funds were wasted—on the expenses of a costly governmental establishment, the interest on a great debt, the profits of the monopolists, and the burden of pensions and emoluments He called Grant's attention to the opium traffic, which paid the Company profits of one thousand per cent, so important was this monopoly that the Supervisor of Opium was paid a higher salary than the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Judicature He satirically pictured the Company in two rôles, the high guardian of the morals

²⁴ *Parliamentary Debates*, XIX (1833), 191, 200, W N Molesworth, *The History of England from the year 1830* (3 vols, London, 1874), I, 316

²⁵ *The Parliamentary Review*, II (1833), 473

of India and the instrument for spreading moral depravity throughout the Orient. Certainly his view contrasted sharply with that of *John Bull*, the prototype of his Indian enemy, which opposed the opening of the China trade on the ground that by doing so the profits of this monopoly would be lost. His final condemnation was cast upon a government which refused to recognize the political existence of the people it held in subjection, but in which any one purchasing five hundred pounds of stock could become a participant. The Tories and Whigs opposed annually elected Parliaments for England, but they were anxious to maintain the Court of the Directors, which was "a daily parliament" for a country six thousand miles away. Against any measure which perpetuated this system, he entered "his earnest and solemn protest."

On July 10, when the bill came up for a second reading, he offered an amendment providing for the opening of the China trade, but deferring the consideration of the government of India until a later time. He again attacked the Company's rule. The productivity of agriculture had declined, ground down by taxation, the Hindu peasants lived on threepence a day. Justice was put up at auction and knocked down to the highest bidder. Fergusson nodded his assent to this statement. The Company's much praised religious toleration was only a toleration of abominations. The country had been invaded, ravaged, and devastated—all for "filthy lucre and unholy gain." As a civilizing influence the effect of English occupation had been negligible, roads were impassable, and the post moved at the rate of only three miles an hour. Worst of all no provision had been made for the education of the people. India was an "unrepresented country."²⁶

The Ministry had chosen Macaulay to make its apology, and he laboured at the task in rounded swells of rhetoric. He chided Buckingham for making so much of the slowness of the post. He doubted that the data were sufficient to judge as to the advance or decay of India during the past two centuries, anyway, the Ministers of the Crown were as much responsible for the existing evils as the Company. Hume agreed with this view, as he did also with the opinion that there was no substitute for the Company, which was, as Macaulay said, neither Crown, nor Whig, nor High-Church, nor Low-Church, nor Tory. Truly guilt and sham had marked its

²⁶ *Parliamentary Debates*, XVIII (1833), 758-766, XIX (1833), 479-498, 504 *et seq.*

early career, but in recent years there had begun "a stupendous process, the reconstruction of a decomposed society" Certainly there were evils in the Indian administration—a heavy burden of taxation and a defective legal system—but what was to be done? Modify and codify the laws, admit the natives slowly to political power, practise economy, and wait "We are walking in darkness We do not see whither we are going" But the Whig orator had visions

I see ample reason for exultation and for a good hope I see that we have established order where we found confusion I see that the predatory tribes have quailed before the valour of a braver and sterner race I see peace studiously preserved I see the horrors of war mitigated by the chivalrous and Christian spirit of Europe I see a government anxiously bent on the public good I see the morality, the philosophy, the taste of Europe, beginning to produce a salutary effect on the hearts and understanding of our subjects I see the public mind of India, that public mind which we found debased and contracted by the worst forms of political and religious tyranny, expanding itself to just and noble views of the ends of government and the social duties of man ²⁷

Notwithstanding his visions Macaulay admitted, "The destinies of our Indian Empire are covered with thick darkness"

If he had viewed with Buckingham the labourers in the salt marshes, tyrannized over by sepoys and police guards, treated more cruelly than West Indian slaves, slaughtered by tigers, and carried off by floods, the Whig apologist might have penetrated that blanket of darkness to a time a hundred years hence when the destinies of the Indian Empire were to be even more obscure than when he vouch'd such high hopes If he had seen the path indicated by his opponent and had set England's feet in that path, the outlook for the Indian Empire might not be so black in the 1930's

Speaking on the bill at the third reading, Buckingham persisted in his original opposition to its political provisions ²⁸ The Ministers ought "to have made some provisions in the new arrangement, for the admission of some few representatives of the British population, as well as the natives, in order to make a beginning at least, of that system of self-government, to which they ought to advance all our colonies as fast as possible" "Instead of this cumbrous and complicated system, he conceived that India should be prepared as speedily as possible, to govern itself" In *The Parliamentary Review* he

²⁷ *Parliamentary Debates*, XIX. (1833), 521 and *passim*.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, XX (1833), 22 *et seq*.

advocated the establishment of a legislative council, elected by the resident English and the natives, which should have full control over the government of the country. Free settlement, freedom of the press, a fair taxation system, and facilities for general education completed his proposals for the rehabilitation of the country that the Company had so mercilessly exploited.²⁹ Perhaps, as Macaulay said, England was trying to make bricks without straw in India, but Buckingham would have moved more quickly even in attempting the impossible than did the self-congratulatory Whigs of 1833. Buckingham also looked upon the financial arrangement provided for in the bill as "the most monstrous injustice," because it saddled upon the natives "the additional wrong of paying, from the produce of their soil, the taxes necessary to meet the interest on the debt contracted for their own subjugation and continued for their wrong." In his peroration he singled out for highest praise that clause which, in opening the door for the admission of natives to office, was the first recognition of the political existence of the natives of India, in this clause he saw the first step toward freeing them from "the treble yoke of foreign subjugation, fiscal oppression, and degrading superstition."³⁰

Not the least interesting aspect of Buckingham's position during this debate is the similarity between his views and those of later and better-known men. In 1858 when the Company's regime was ended, John Bright, its most vehement critic, argued that the neglect of industry, the maladministration of justice, and the excessive burden of taxation had reduced the people of India to a state of misery.³¹ Even more notable is the parallel between Buckingham's views and those of India's great nationalist leader, Gandhi. In his letter of March 2, 1930, to Lord Irwin, the viceroy, Gandhi stated his grounds for opposing British rule:

And why do I regard British rule as a curse? It has impoverished the dumb millions by a system of progressive exploitation and by a ruinously expensive military and civil administration which the country

²⁹ *The Parliamentary Review*, IV (1833), 25.

³⁰ *Parliamentary Debates*, XX (1833), 25, 35, 3 and 4 Wm IV, c 85, s 87. "No native of the said territories, nor any natural born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the Company."

³¹ *Parliamentary Debates*, CLI (1858), 331.

can never afford. It has reduced us politically to serfdom. It has sapped the foundations of our culture. And, by its policy of cruel disarmament, it has degraded us spiritually.³²

In greater detail Gandhi enumerated the salient features of the exploitation by which the population is kept impoverished and powerless—the terrific pressure of the land revenue, the drink and the drug evils, and the excessive cost of the administration. And the worst fear of Sir Thomas Munro, who had opposed a free press because it might contrast the pay of a native soldier with his foreign commander, was realized in Gandhi's statement of the disparity between the salary of the foreign viceroy and the average earnings of the native ryot, the former being five thousand times the latter. Except in the unique advocacy of passive resistance as an instrument of political action—and even toward this position he approached when in later days he became a vigorous apostle of pacifism³³—Buckingham anticipated the reasoning of the great Indian nationalist leader on the condition of the Indian people and the ideals for that people.

Of course the advocacy of such advanced views in 1833 was futile, for no one was much interested in India. Empty benches surrounded the orators, and all motions—to defer the consideration of the government of India to a later date, to extend the Charter for a period of only ten years, and to abolish the salt monopoly—were voted down. Ewart, sitting for Liverpool, supported the last of these motions because the salt monopoly was a great hardship upon his constituents who exported the commodity. Fergusson appeared with a petition from the Company, protesting against the extension of the Governor-General's power and the increase in the ecclesiastical establishment. Now India was to have two Bishops instead of one. But Grant had his way, and the passage of the bill was hastened so that the blessings of the Company's rule might be continued.

The victory, however, was more with Buckingham than with the

³² *The Living Age*, Vol. 338 (1930), 264 *et seq.*, Gandhi's letter to Lord Irwin, March 2, 1930. See for comparison *The Oriental Herald*, III (1824), 30 *et seq.*, "Monopolies, Cruelties, and Oppressions in India."

³³ J. S. Buckingham, *National Evils and Practical Remedies, with the plan of a Model Town Accompanied by an examination of some important moral and political problems* (London, 1849), 70. Buckingham used the term "passive resistance" in advocating the refusal to perform military service as a method of combating militarism. See J. S. Buckingham, *Belgium, The Rhine, Switzerland, and Holland* (London, 1848), II, 414.

Company, for in the Government's flat refusal to renew the China monopoly and in that unanimity with which the India bill was accepted there was abundant testimony to the campaign he had waged against Mr John Public opinion triumphed—all authorities agree to that. The secondary writers have only echoed the convictions of the parties primary to the enactment of the measure ³⁴ Speaking to the Indian proprietors on Malcolm's resolutions, Astell answered their objection to ending the monopoly "But the public voice rendered it impossible for Parliament to grant that exclusive privilege" Macaulay's periods testified to the same fact "The China trade is to be opened, reason requires this—public opinion requires it" No minister, Whig or Tory, could have been found to propose a renewal of the monopoly, no Parliament reformed or unreformed, would have listened to such a proposal" Grant went even further, finding in national sentiments good cause for enacting the entire bill "Public opinion and public feeling in this country were now acting on the government of the people of India—not producing any violent effects, but operating by the slow but certain process of kindness" Nothing could be plainer than this admission of the power which drove the Cabinet to the framing of the measure And Peel attributed the apathy toward the bill to the general approbation with which its provisions were regarded by public men of all parties ³⁵

Certainly the marshalling of the national conviction had been largely the work of Buckingham Since 1824 he had agitated for reform, and the years from 1829 to the opening of the First Reformed Parliament he had devoted to speaking against the Company Contemporaries understood the significance of his campaign Granting that Canning had proposed in 1813 to extend the China monopoly for only ten years and admitting that all the elements of an opinion hostile to the Company existed, there is yet truth in

³⁴ James Mill and H H Wilson, *A History of British India* (5th ed, 10 vols, London, 1858), IX, 392, J C Marshman, *The History of India from the earliest period to the close of Lord Dalhousie's administration* (3 vols, London, 1867) III, 83, W N Molesworth, *The History of England from the year 1830* (3 vols, London, 1874), I, 315. S C Buxton, *Finance and Politics, an Historical Study, 1783-1885* (2 vols, London, 1888), II, 35, Beckles Willson, *Ledger and Sword, or the Honourable Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies, 1599-1874* (2 vols, London, 1903), II, 378

³⁵ *The Asiatic Journal*, new series, XI (1833), 151, *Parliamentary Debates*, XIX (1833), 504, 704, *The Reformed Ministry and the Reformed Parliament*, Reprinted from the Fifth London edition (Washington, 1833), 27.

the assertion of William Rathbone of Liverpool that Buckingham applied the torch to the pile, lighting up the issue so that there could be no hiding its solution. Another Liverpool merchant defended Buckingham's "fair claim to the merit of having first publicly agitated" the great question of the China trade. *The Caledonian Mercury* saw him as the most formidable enemy with whom the sovereign monopolists of Leadenhall Street had to contend. *The Glasgow Free Press* testified to the rapid manner in which as his tour progressed the India question was forced on the country. *The Bristol Journal* recorded that he "impressed on the minds of his hearers in a most emphatic manner, the absolute necessity of union and co-operation" in opposing the common foe. A writer in *The Sheffield Iris* credited "his writings, lectures, and indefatigable perseverance" with having "aroused the united energies of the whole British nation to oppose the monopoly of trade in the East." *The Iris* credited him with having had an influence far wider than upon only the audiences which heard him, it had no doubts as to the ultimate recognition that would be given him "Mr. Buckingham will not less certainly hereafter rank in history as the man who led the van in the attack upon and demolition of that system which has for ages shut British enterprise, British improvement, and British commerce out of the fertile provinces of India." And *The Asiatic Journal*'s complaint that the furor against the Company was being raised by "itinerant quacks" was as much a testimony to his work as were the encomiums of his supporters. Perhaps the conclusive evidence as to the significance of his work is to be found in the number of petitions filed against the Company. In the earlier agitation of 1812 and 1813 sixty-eight petitions were introduced in the first year and one less in the following year. In 1829 thirty-seven petitions were presented to the Commons, in 1830, after Buckingham's tours, two hundred and twenty protests against the monopoly were registered. As a secondary authority has declared, Buckingham was one of the Eumenides that pursued the Company to its destruction, as a contemporary observer recorded, he was an "Archimedes of the press," who made of it "a lever to move the gigantic monopoly of the East India Company at its very base." The same witness ranked him with "the bravest heroes of which England in India could boast."³⁶

³⁶ *History of the Public Proceedings on the question of the East India Monopoly during the past year* (London, 1830), 22, *The Oriental Herald*, XX (1825), 216.

4 THE BEGINNINGS OF MARINE REFORM

In view of the dangers of their occupation and its importance to the nation, the seamen were the most neglected and cruelly treated members of the working class. Except for the improvement of their health, which resulted from Doctor James Lind's discovery of lemon juice as a preventive for scurvy, little had been done by 1833 to relieve the commonplace miseries of their existence. Ashore the "crimps" continued to prey upon the sailors. The Sailors' Home, an American Institution, was not introduced into England until 1837. Impressionment as ever was a curse, in the navy brutal discipline was still enforced, and the cruelty of the merchant officers was also unabated. But worse than all these were the vulture-like shipowners who sent out unseaworthy vessels in order to lose them and collect the insurance. The Lloyd's classification of 1798, which was based upon the age of ships instead of their construction and state of repair, gave such monsters their opportunity, new ships, regardless of their seaworthiness, were always placed in class A 1, and ships were built actually to be lost. In 1824 a shipowners' committee had exposed the practice, but nothing was done about it. Eight hundred ships were wrecked in 1833, and of these not many more than a third were destroyed by unavoidable natural causes. Buckingham estimated that these "disasters" had killed almost three thousand sailors and wiped out property worth over a million pounds, spreading "want and dismay" among seafaring folk.³⁷

He made his first effort to bring about some reform in marine practices on June 25, 1833, when he brought in a motion to abolish flogging in the army and the navy. This resolution drew from Ellice, the Secretary of War, the statement that an order had been framed restricting the use of the whip to cases of disobedience, thieving, and drunkenness while on guard. When Ellice requested the withdrawal of his resolution, Buckingham agreed, with the stipulation that he would bring it forward next session if the abuse was

The Caledonian Mercury, July 16, 1829, *The Glasgow Free Press*, August 6, 1829, *The Bristol Journal*, March 27, 1829, *The Sheffield Iris*, August 16, 1831, *The Asiatic Journal*, XXVII (1829), 686, *General Index to the Journal of the House of Commons*, 1801-1820, 735, *Ibid.*, 1820-1837, 783, F. Dawtrey Drewitt, *Bombay in the Days of George IV* (London, 1907), 111, Spencer T. Hall, *Biographical Sketches of Remarkable People, chiefly from personal recollection* (London, 1873), 200. ³⁷ *The Parliamentary Review*, V (1834), 559.

not suppressed. This proposal, together with those of Hume and Fancourt, who had introduced motions for the abolition of flogging in the army, led to the appointment in 1835 of a commission to investigate military and naval punishments, ultimately executive action prohibited the use of the lash. Even Buckingham's critics admitted he had taken an honourable part in this humanitarian work.³⁸

Late in the 1833 session he made a much more serious attempt to better the lot of the sailor by moving for the abolition of impressment. He had postponed bringing forward this resolution three times at the request of Sir James Graham, the First Lord of the Admiralty, but that estimable person did not hesitate now to criticize him for introducing the resolution so late in the session. Graham also ridiculed Buckingham for making a long speech and playing to the gallery. Hume replied to these aspersions by accusing Graham of unfair dealing, and the provincial press, notably at Hull where Graham, as a candidate for Parliament, had opposed impressment, was sharp in its comments upon his conduct. Buckingham argued that impressment should be abandoned like "a decayed and condemned hulk" and proposed, as a substitute, a general registry of all seamen and workers at crafts connected with shipping, their classification into three divisions, and the conscription of seamen from these classes by ballot as the need for men arose. He also advocated a system of rewards as a means of attracting men to the service and of securing their re-enlistment. He insisted that impressment was similar to slavery, in *The Parliamentary Review* he went so far as to express the hope that the sailors would revolt against the tyrants who seized them. Graham protested that this comparison of impressment with slavery created discontent in the navy and defended impressment as "a part of the common-law prerogative of the Crown," quoting Chatham—"who preferred the honour and safety of his country to popular applause"—as having declared that not a ship could be respectably manned without it. Lord Althorp admitted that impressment was objectionable but argued that the House would surely not think of abolishing a prerogative of the Crown just because it gave rise to abuses; furthermore he pleaded, "On the day in which the country deprived the sovereign of the power of impressment entirely, on that day our naval suprem-

³⁸ *Parliamentary Debates*, XVIII (1833), 1230, *Chapters in the Political History of Sheffield*, 6

acy would be at an end" In *The Parliamentary Review* Buckingham sneered at Althorp, quoting with fine sarcasm the lines of the national naval anthem

Rule, Britannia—Britannia rules the waves,
For Britons never will be slaves!

When his motion was lost, 59 to 54, he declared that the majority of five "should be called the saviours of the country, and their names embalmed in the memory of all time to come"³⁹

In 1834 he returned to the battle against impressment with a motion for a select committee to consider the practicability of devising some plan by which the navy could be manned without the use of force In supporting this resolution he again detailed the cruelty of impressment and referred to Admiral Patten and Lord Nelson as authorities on the inefficiency of impressment During the Napoleonic Wars the average cost per enlistment had been twenty pounds, and forty-two thousand men had deserted "The hand-cuffs of the press-gang and the lash of the boatswain's mate had each been tried, and the effect of both was to inspire hatred of the service and frequent desertion." "If they [the sailors] were to fight the battles of freedom, it was necessary that they themselves should be free" Graham met the resolution with a counter-motion for leave to bring in a bill to consolidate and amend the law so as to set up a registry of the seafaring men of the kingdom He proposed to register all seamen and to select from them by ballot the men necessary for the navy it was Buckingham's plan of the previous session, except that Graham held impressment in reserve as the last resort Lord Althorp assured Buckingham that the Ministry was moving in the direction he desired, but, because the Government proposal left the right of impressment untouched, he pushed his motion to a division He was beaten, 218 to 130, and Graham was given permission to bring in a registry bill⁴⁰

Buckingham's persistence won generous praise from the press. *The London Times* deplored the adverse vote upon his motion, *The Globe* complimented his persuasive speech, and *The True Sun* applauded him for having upheld "the real honour of the English navy, and the real interests and glory of the English nation." *The Halifax and Huddersfield Express* credited him with "an

³⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, XX (1833), 636 *et seq.* *The Parliamentary Review*, III (1833), 565

⁴⁰ *Parliamentary Debates*, XXI (1834), 1063 *et seq.*

important triumph," while *The Wakefield and Dewsbury Journal* railed at the Whigs who were "behind the spirit of the Age, and would prolong by temporizing all the abuses of the old Tory system" In Sheffield praise for him was accompanied by abuse for Parker, who had voted with the Ministers In 1833 *Figaro* asked to hear no more "of the respectability of Mr Parker," "of Whig philanthropy," and "of the slanders with which Mr Buckingham has been so wantonly and maliciously vilified", in 1834 *The Iris* expressed the conviction that "the banking influence" would not always return a member for the town ⁴¹

The upshot of these attempts to abolish impressment was the legislation of 1835, two bills were passed, one to create a general registry, the other to encourage voluntary enlistment in the navy The first act also consolidated the regulations for protecting the common sailors No seaman was to be taken aboard ship without a written contract Lodging-house proprietors were not to retain a sailor's effects on the pretence of his owing debts Merchant captains were to keep medicines on ship-board for the treatment of sailors taken sick on voyages Wages were not to be reduced on account of injuries And at the end of a voyage the master was to give each man a certificate of discharge The second act related to naval seamen Impressment was never again to be resorted to except in an emergency No man who had served five years was to be impressed again until after a period of two years from the date of his discharge This was the first legal break in the right of impressment Strict regulations were to govern the administration of corporal punishment A sick mess was to be established on each warship In preparing this bill Auckland, First Lord of the Admiralty in Lord Melbourne's Cabinet, consulted with Buckingham on the various clauses, he also gave the measure a final revision By 1836 the new system was operating with such good results that more men than ever before were available for the navy, the death-blow to impressment had been struck.⁴²

⁴¹ *The London Atlas*, March 9, 1834, *The London Times*, March 6, 1834, *The London Globe*, March 6, 1834, *The True Sun*, March 6, 1834, *The Halifax and Huddersfield Express*, March 20, 1834, *The Wakefield and Dewsbury Journal*, March 8, 1834, *Figaro*, I (1833), 289, *The Sheffield Iris*, March 11, 1834

⁴² *Parliamentary Debates*, XXVI (1835), 1120 *et seq.*, XXIX (1835), 344 *et seq.*, XXXII (1836), 1108, *The House of Commons Journals*, XC (1835), 511, 5 and 6 Wm. IV, c 19, 5 and 6 Wm. IV, c 24, *The Sheffield Iris*, February 2, 1836

But the main problem of marine reform had not yet been dealt with, and in 1836 Buckingham attacked it by securing the appointment of a select committee to investigate the causes of shipwrecks. Buckingham served as chairman and composed the report, which laid the foundation for modern English marine legislation. The chief causes of marine disasters were found to be defective construction, inadequate equipment, imperfect repairs, improper and excessive loading, bad ship design, incompetent masters and owners, drunkenness, certain insurance practices, and inaccurate charts. In 1834 Lloyd's introduced a classification of ships based on seaworthiness, and the number of wrecks began to decline. The committee emphasized the incompetency of the merchant officers and the drunkenness of the men, whose frequent boast on coming ashore was, "I will go up to Wapping and lay my soul afloat."

As a remedial measure Buckingham recommended the creation of a marine board with very broad duties and powers. It was to establish standards of attainment for the various grades of officers, to set up schools for their training, to give them examinations, and to recommend them for licenses of appointment and promotion. It was to organize boards of inquiry to investigate the loss of ships at sea, with powers of censuring both officers and owners, and to create special tribunals for the adjudication of disputes between the men and their superiors, either officers or owners. It was also to administer the general registry, to issue to each man a book showing his service record, and to promote asylums and savings banks to protect the men and their money. Finally, the board was to devise a scientific classification of vessels and to work out a general code of sea law. The committee suggested the negotiation of an international treaty as a means of bringing about a more general security at sea. In other words Buckingham proposed the professionalization of the merchant service and its general supervision by the state so that the lives of sailors and passengers and the property of owners and shippers might be as safe as human foresight could make them.⁴³

In 1837 Buckingham sponsored just one bill, a measure to carry out these recommendations, but it was defeated on the second reading. Its opponents protested that the bill touched upon things that were not susceptible to legislative regulation, it was "a legis-

⁴³ *Report from the Select Committee on Shipwrecks, 1836, passim.*

lative monstrosity" Labouchere, high in Whig councils, conceived it to be "a vexatious interference with the shipping interest of the country" The Conservative Lord Sandon supported the bill, as did Hume, who thought that every loss of a ship at sea ought to be investigated When Poulett Thompson, President of the Board of Trade, pointed out that certain regulations for the protection of passengers had been instituted after the death of seven hundred immigrants bound for Quebec in 1834, Buckingham insisted that the merchant sailors were as much entitled to protection as the passengers⁴⁴

The importance of Buckingham's work for marine reform can be appreciated only in a perspective which reaches back from contemporary marine legislation to the chaos that was the merchant service of his youth Subsequent committees and enactments, beginning under the Tories in the 'forties, realized every essential proposal made by Buckingham, except the creation of a marine board Instead of a special body for the purpose, the administration of the merchant service was placed under the Board of Trade—in the Marine Department of 1850 And Samuel Plimsoll, whose campaign in the 1870's for the kindlier treatment of common sailors won him national renown, was only following in the footsteps of the sailor boy from Falmouth Buckingham deserves the credit for having given the original impulse to the development of that legislation which has so completely humanized the treatment of English sailors at sea and so thoroughly protected life and property that the English merchant service is the model of responsible efficiency for the contemporary nautical world.

Buckingham took part also in the discussion of the establishment of steam communication with India⁴⁵ There was disagreement as to which of two routes—by way of the Red Sea with an overland passage across Egypt or up the Euphrates River and by caravan to Antioch—was the more practicable, and in 1834 a select committee was appointed to report on the advantages of each. Buckingham served on this committee and also testified before it. He favoured the Red Sea route because, since steamships could go in straight lines, the difficulties of navigation which closed the long narrow sea to sailing vessels half of each year would not affect them He thought

⁴⁴ *Parliamentary Debates*, XXXVII (1837), 164 *et seq.*, 1222 *et seq.*

⁴⁵ *Report from the Select Committee on Navigation to India, minutes of evidence*, 221 *et seq.*

that the Euphrates route would be dangerous on account of the hostile Arab tribes which lived along its banks His former companion in Palestine, William John Banks, Jr , also appeared before the committee, but he was unable to judge the advantages of the two routes The committee reported in favour of trying both, and Parliament appropriated money to further the experiment The Red Sea route was to be reopened at last.

5 THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT

Free trade in beer was established in 1830, and thirty thousand places for its sale—two hundred and eighty in Sheffield alone—were opened at once But there was no decrease in the number of public-houses selling spirituous liquors Any householder who paid two guineas and produced one surety for twenty pounds or two for ten pounds each could set up a beer shop, and the great brewers willingly furnished the necessary capital and stock

It is not necessary here to answer the question as to the decline of drunkenness since Hogarth's day, less or more, England was a drunken country in the 1830's Every trade and profession had its own code of rules for treating, and every public occasion from a christening to a coronation was incomplete without a free imbibing of intoxicants At the opening of a coal seam the workmen drank a gallon or two of whisky, a new apprentice in a shop or a new labourer on a job was expected "to set 'em up," and he was beaten if he refused, the various stages in the learning of a trade were passed only by paying "a garnish" to the journeymen, and at fairs and markets farmers and their daughters, butchers and other purveyors sealed bargains with "a taste " The nation celebrated William IV's coronation by going on a general "spree," and scenes such as those in Manchester were common, especially in the larger towns

We saw whole pitchers thrown indiscriminately among the crowd —men holding up their hats to receive drink, people quarrelling and fighting for the possession of a jug, the strong taking the liquor from the weak, boys and girls, men and women, in a condition of beastly drunkenness, staggering before the depositary of ale, or lying prostrate on the ground, under every variety of circumstance, and in every degree of exposure, swearing, groaning, vomiting, but calling for more liquor when they could not stand, or even sit, to drink it Every kind

of excess, indeed, which the most fertile imagination can conceive, or the most graphic pen describe, was there witnessed in nauseous and loathsome extravagance ⁴⁶

The future empress of India cultivated a taste for "bubble and squeak," but the nation preferred "a tankard or two of reaming swats"

Under these circumstances the modern temperance movement, originally American, took root in England and quickly became strong enough to raise a nation-wide agitation for the governmental regulation of the liquor traffic. The first English temperance society was organized at Bradford in June, 1830, by the end of the year thirty societies with ten thousand members had appeared, chiefly in the new industrial towns. A year later the British and Foreign Temperance Association under aristocratic patronage held its first meeting at Exeter Hall in London and went enthusiastically to work, organizing fifty-five auxiliaries, holding two hundred meetings, and sending out one hundred thousand tracts by June, 1832. Buckingham was an original member of the society. Meanwhile in Preston under the leadership of Joseph Livesey, the movement took a turn away from temperance toward complete abstinence, and "the pledge" and the word "teetotal" were invented. The former was the work of Livesey and six other members of the Preston Temperance Society, the latter was the accidental creation of a simple-minded "Dicky" Turner, who, in a moment of enthusiasm after having taken the pledge, stuttered out his conviction that nothing but "tee-total" abstinence would do ⁴⁷. He ran up and down the streets of Preston, shaking a rattle in an effort to attract the townsmen to his new faith. By March, 1833, there were 250 temperance societies in England, 380 in Scotland, and 155,000 members in the whole United Kingdom. The London temperance press alone had issued 1,311,250 tracts, and temperance mugs with legends such as "Remember the Reckoning" and "Drunkenness is a pair of spectacles to see the devil and all his works" engraved on their bottoms had come into existence.

Buckingham's temperance convictions had been shaped by his experiences among the Mohammedan peoples of the Levant, almost

⁴⁶ A Prentice, *Historical Sketches and Personal Recollections of Manchester, 1792-1832* (Manchester, 1851), 216

⁴⁷ John Pearce, *The Life and Teachings of Joseph Livesey Comprising his Autobiography* (London, 1885), 65

his first observation upon returning from India was the great contrast between the drunkenness of Christian England and the sobriety of the heathen East. But he did not view the liquor question from a religious point of view. In 1826, under medical advice, he gave up the use of all alcoholic beverages, and a year later, three years before the temperance movement began its rapid growth, he stated his conception of the problem.

Of all the complicated evils to which the manufacturing population of this country is exposed, there is not one more productive of misery than an indulgence, almost unlimited, in the use of spirituous liquors.

But what *can* a man do, whose mind has never been illuminated by knowledge, or whose heart has never been softened by instruction? He must have *some* recreation—some amusement as a relief after his daily labours, and he seeks it from among his own equals, and after the examples of the partners of his occupation.⁴⁸

In 1832 he took "the pledge," joined the ranks of the "teetotallers," and during the campaign for Parliament let it be known that, if elected, he would bring the liquor question before the Commons.

But the original discussion of the liquor problem in the First Reformed Parliament was begun by representatives of the landed interest. Some thought that the repeal of the malt tax would increase agricultural profits, while others desired to amend the Beer Act so as to lessen the amount of drunkenness among the agricultural workers. The Tories were disturbed by the decreasing profits of the farmers, the Whigs were interested only because the revenue was involved.

In general, those who favoured repealing the malt tax and supported the existing Beer Bill pleaded for the right of the poor man to have "a wholesome beverage at a cheap price" or played the rôle of saviours of the people's morals. The Radical Hume and the Tory Inglby agreed that the closing of the beer shops would only increase the demoralization of the people by driving them to the gin shops. Hume argued that not free trade in beer but ignorance was the cause of moral degradation and demanded the establishment of a national system of education. Lord Howick believed that the Beer Act had increased the comforts of the labouring poor, he also advocated their education but not in learning hard to acquire—they should be taught their duties and true interests in society. Roebuck presented a petition bearing four thousand

⁴⁸ *The Sphynx*, July 29, 1827.

signatures, mostly "marks," which prayed for the extension of beer shops, he praised free trade in liquor and quoted Place on the improved morals of the people. In 1834 when Palmer moved the postponement for six months of Knatchbull's amendment to the Beer Act, he painted the beer shop in its rosiest light. "If a poor man had no fire at home, he went to a beer shop where, in a comfortable house and at a comfortable fire, he sat for an hour and refreshed himself."

The opponents of the beer shops drew a different picture. Radicals, like Buller and Attwood, supported the view that the shops were demoralizing the masses, and many of the Tories, including Chandos, Sandon, and Baring, went into the details of the degradation. Baring told of the two hundred women who petitioned the House to repeal the Beer Act so that their husbands would come home at night. Lord Ebrington gave another view of the felicity which Palmer had praised "In some of the public houses, the apprentices, both male and female, were accommodated with beds, that employers could not trust their agricultural servants to take care of the cattle, and that the ploughmen were drunk in the fields, whilst their families were starving at home." Heathcote, a sympathizer with the temperance movement, reminded the supporters of the Beer Act that the object of beneficent legislation was to clothe the home of the poor man with comfort, and Buckingham protested that, if there were no other arguments against the act except that it left the wife and children at home in cold loneliness while the husband and father enjoyed the warmth of the beer shop, that was enough to condemn it. The opponents of the Beer Act carried Knatchbull's amendment, which forbade the licensing of a beer shop in a house of less than ten pounds value and prohibited drinking on the premises. *The London Times* asked, "Was there ever so cruel a clause thrust into an act of parliament?"⁴⁹

Before the passage of this amendment Buckingham began to present petitions from the temperance societies praying for the appointment of a select committee to investigate the causes of drunkenness. Cobbett objected to the introduction of the petitions because they pointed only to the enactment of laws that would be laughed at, something, he said, must be left to the pulpit, parents, and the moral teacher. On June 4, 1834, Buckingham brought in

⁴⁹ For Buckingham's first speech on temperance, May 16, 1834, see *Parliamentary Debates*, XXIII (1834), 1124 *et seq.*

a resolution for such a committee, as an added function it was to consider what, if any, legislative measures could be devised to prevent the spread of the evil In preparation for the moving of the resolution the temperance societies had canvassed the members of the House of Commons, and a delegation had called upon Lord Althorp asking him to give the motion at least the Government's silent support An opposing deputation had come from Ireland to inform him that Buckingham was "a monomaniac" Althorp told the temperance delegation that Buckingham had "a bee in his bonnet"

A titter ran around the benches of the Commons when Buckingham rose to speak on his resolution, and most of the members left —probably to enjoy a bottle of port at Bellamy's He began by describing the physiological effects of drunkenness, he proceeded by listing the economic wastage attending it, he concluded by explaining the social disorders it gave rise to, quoting Wellington on the relation of liquor-drinking to the increase of military crimes and describing the decline of the physical and moral vigour of the people

We see the town and country population, with sickly countenances —sunken eyes—pallid cheeks—livid lips—enfeebled knees—palsied heads and tremulous hands—absolutely diminishing in stature, and becoming uglier in feature—begetting progeny which, besides partaking of the diseased constitution of their parents, are initiated into the use of the insidious poison in their very infancy by the parents themselves, and are growing up more feeble in bodily strength, more weak in mental power, and more vicious and degraded in moral conduct, than even their parents themselves, to whom they are inferior in physical stamina, but whom they exceed in self-abandonment and dissipation ⁵⁰

Among the causes which he set forth as having created these conditions were the example of the upper class in the preceding generations, the severe taxation which burdened the people, their excessive labour, the bare subsistence level of their lives, and their crowded quarters in the new industrial towns It was no mystery to him that "the blazing fire and easy chair of the taproom" were more inviting to the working man than "an empty hearth, a damp floor, and a cold and comfortless lodgings"

A short but lively debate followed his speech Cobbett insisted that the people had always got drunk, at least as far back as Noah's

⁵⁰ *Parliamentary Debates*, XXIV (1834), 105.

time, and always would, if something had to be done, he declared that the Government ought to buy and distribute a million or two of his sermons against the vice When Pease, the Quaker, asserted that drunkenness was increasing, cries of "No, no" filled the almost empty House Other supporters of the resolution brought out that men in the Arctic remained in vigorous health without the use of stimulants and claimed that morality could be helped by legislation. This latter assertion was denied by the Radicals and Whigs, except when they contended for the Beer Bill and the Poor Law Amendment. Lord Althorp opposed the resolution, arguing that it did not make any difference what day of the week the people got drunk and claiming that education was the proper solution of the problem Whiggery was intricate, and Althorp's next act was a sharp comment upon the sincerity of his argument Immediately following the debate on Buckingham's motion, Roebuck moved for a committee to inquire into a way to establish a national system of education, and the noble lord asked that the committee investigate instead the effect of the grant made in 1833 for building school houses When Roebuck withdrew his motion, Althorp had his way, but the committee never reported There was a general tendency to introduce remarks on education into all discussions of the liquor traffic, the Radicals, in particular, argued that education was the only means of reducing drunkenness, a position taken by Hume in opposing Buckingham's resolution The surprise of the evening, and of the session too, came with the vote, 64 to 47 in favour of appointing the committee The temperance forces had gathered their full strength to oppose an indifferent House, and Buckingham's speech impressed several doubtfully minded auditors The resolution was one of the two carried over Althorp's opposition during the session ⁵¹

Buckingham was named chairman of the committee, which included many prominent members of the House, but they were not sympathetic and left the committee's work to its more than willing sponsor. He examined most of the witnesses, compiled the evidence, and composed the report The aristocratic British and Foreign Temperance Society did not aid the committee in gathering evidence, it was opposed to "teetotalism "

⁵¹ *Parliamentary Debates*, XXIV (1834), 90 *et seq.*, *Journal of the American Temperance Union*, I (1837), 188, P T Winskill, *The Temperance Movement and its Workers A Record of Social, Moral, Religious, and Political Progress* (4 vols., Edinburgh, 1892), I, 110.

Witnesses were called from London, Manchester, and Edinburgh and included not only professional men and officials but also labourers Charles Saunders, a London coal-whipper, described the practices of the publicans who served as employment agents in his occupation To get a job a man had to go into a public shop, and if he bought no liquor, he was thrown out Among all who came each morning for work, probably fifty or sixty, the publican gave the jobs to the hard drinkers, and when they went off to work each man was required to take with him what was called an *allowance* At the end of the day the men returned to the shop to receive their pay and spend a portion of it in a round of drinks Robert Broughton, a police magistrate at Worship Street, narrated events from the night life of the city and declared that drunkenness among women was on the increase Perhaps the most harrowing picture of the degradation accompanying the consumption of liquor was drawn by George Wilson, who kept a grocer's shop back of Westminster Abbey, across the street from his house was a gin-palace

Last Sunday morning, I arose about seven o'clock, and looked from my bed-room at the gin palace opposite me, I saw it surrounded with customers, amongst them I saw two coal-porters, apparently with women, who appeared to be their wives, and a little child six or seven years old, these forced their way through the crowd after much struggling, they got to the bar, and came out again in a short time, one of the women so intoxicated, as to be unable to walk, she went against the door-post, and then fell flat on the pavement, with her legs partly in the shop and her person exposed the little child who was with her came and endeavoured to arouse her by smacking her on the legs and on the body, and on the face , the little thing appeared to be the most sensible of the party, during this time, a woman almost in a state of nudity, with a fine infant at her breast, the only dress being its nightshirt, followed by another child about eight years old, naked, except a nightshirt, and without either shoes or stockings, followed a wretched looking man into the house, I saw them struggling through the crowd to get to the bar, they all had their gin, the infant had the first share from the woman's glass, they came back to the outside of the door, and there they could scarcely stand, but appeared ripe for a quarrel, the man and woman appeared to quarrel, the little child in her arms cried, the wretched woman beat it most unmercifully, the other naked little child ran across the road, the woman called to it to come back, it did so, and she beat it ⁵²

⁵² Report from the Select Committee to inquire into the Causes of Drunkenness, minutes of evidence, 275

Other witnesses added details to the picture of national depravity Benjamin Bradley, a boroughreeve in Manchester, testified that drunkenness had increased and described how the factory children, whose earnings went to their parents, were required, if they received more than twopence a week above the stipulated wage, to spend it on drink James Turner, a Manchester cotton broker, informed the committee that there were sixty-six "Odd Fellows" lodges in the town, which met regularly each month and always in a public house Edwin Chadwick, who had compiled the Report of the Poor Law Commission, explained that the multiplication of beer shops had increased drunkenness among the rural population He added the comment, "I should think that any supply of gin was greater than the necessity required either for health or refreshment" Undoubtedly some of the testimony was biased and not a little of it absurd, for example, that of Doctor Robert Greig Dods, who went into an elaborate discussion of how the over-indulgence in alcohol set up physiological processes which culminated in spontaneous combustion and the consequent cremation of the unfortunate toper

The most interesting witness was the Radical politician, Francis Place, whose antagonism to the proposed enactment of legislation for the control of the liquor traffic led him to compose a reply to the committee's report, *A Defence of the People Against J S Buckingham and the Committee* Place opposed the view that drunkenness had increased, except among the agricultural workers, he believed that there had been an elevation in the tastes of the working class, especially in London Place, it must be remembered, had no personal knowledge of conditions in the new factory towns, by 1834 machine industry had made little headway in the London crafts He was also hostile to what he called the regulation of morals by law and was a proponent of the extreme Radical opinion that education was the only means of combatting vice in any form He expressed this view before the committee and explained that by education he meant a sufficient knowledge of morals and political economy to enable working men to understand their actual situation correctly He was explicit as to what sort of knowledge would lead people out of their vicious habits

I know that if you teach ignorant men, especially young men, something of geography, and something of natural history, you give them a taste for reading which hardly ever leaves them One instance—as

to the efficiency of *a little learning* I was going up Constitution hill one Sunday, in the spring, when the moon was up, just before church time, I overtook three lads, they appeared to be what are termed serve boys, plasterers' labourers, the middle one was a lad of 17 or 18, the other two about 15 or 16. The oldest one said, "There is the moon" "Yes," said another "The moon is round, do not you see?" said the large boy "Yes" "That is part of the solar system" "What is that?" asked the other. The lad explained to them the solar system, beginning with the sun, etc. A little further on some vagabonds were being turned out of a gin-shop, among them a lad of about the same age, three parts drunk. He began to spar on the street, offering obstruction to draw attention. The lad teaching the solar system could not have come out of a gin-shop three parts drunk so early on a Sunday morning.⁵³

Place's reply to the committee's report was a survey of the previous attempts to regulate the liquor traffic, an outburst against the legislative coercion of the people, and a tirade against Buckingham.⁵⁴ He accused Buckingham of hearing only those witnesses who would give the evidence he desired, undoubtedly Place knew all about such procedure, for he and Hume had manipulated more than one committee in this fashion. The point of this complaint was Buckingham's refusal to pay any attention to the suggestions of Place, who was anxious to have certain London masters and retired tradesmen testify that they lived soberly. In reviewing the history of liquor, he recalled that Noah had planted a vineyard and that the Scandinavian ancestors of the English had considered drinking a virtue, he was sure that the chairman of the committee knew nothing about the past. But his most acrimonious outburst was directed against the proposed legislative measures, these would be conceived in the coercive spirit of the Six Acts (in passing he did not forget to berate the priesthood and the aristocracy) and would be aimed at the beer shops where the people enjoyed themselves, talked politics, and learned from one another what their masters called "mischief." The leading workers of the committee and especially its chairman were "saints, hypocrites, and fanatics", they had stigmatized the whole working population of the country, they desired to make "this gay earth as gloomy as the cells of the inquisition." Place completely misunderstood Buckingham's aim and intention, as did most of his critics, and this mis-

⁵³ Report from the Select Committee to inquire into the Causes of Drunkenness, minutes of evidence, 229.

⁵⁴ British Museum Add. MSS., 27829, Francis Place, "Defence of the People Against J. S. Buckingham and the Committee," *passim*.

understanding led the Westminster tailor to make statements almost as silly as those in the address to Lord Althorp from the Distillers and Spirit Merchants, who protested in vulgar doggerel that it was sinful to drink a pledge to the King with water

Place's opposition was only a sample of that which greeted the committee's report when it was submitted to the Commons Roars of laughter shook the benches and the galleries, and there was violent resistance to printing it Hawes protested that the committee had no right to report at all, because all the members had not agreed to its findings and recommendations O'Connell was more than usually vehement He claimed that the report was so muddled that the committee must have been drinking "solid water" and objected that, if it was printed, some snail-paced legislator would be moving for a committee to inquire into the best means of preventing flies from destroying honey Buckingham retorted that the Irish would be better off if they drank less Lord John Russell declared that he would never be a party to any measure employing compulsion in regard to the use or non-use of liquor The committee's supporters took the fairer view that it had been authorized, and therefore its report ought to be printed The motion to print was carried by a vote of 63 to 31⁵⁵

The press was even more amused than the Commons, in unison the papers took up *The Spectator*'s slurring nickname, "the Drunken Committee," which *The London Times* said certainly saw double John Bull suggested that it ought to report once a month so as to keep the nation merry and, with reference to the recommendation that opportunities for acquiring an education should be multiplied, sneered, "What do the committee want?—the bricklayers' labourers to learn mathematics, or the washerwoman to commence a course of lectures on political economy?" That, of course, was Place's, not Buckingham's proposal *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, which was usually friendly to Buckingham, described the report as a "tissue of the most extraordinary absurdities ever penned" A writer in Roebuck's *Politics for the People* argued from the propositions of political economy to expose the committee's "gin-palace fallacy", drunkenness had declined, there were fewer drinkers, competition was more keen, therefore the publicans went in for gold fronts, mirrors, and bright lights in order to attract patrons After all the situation was simple, the writer suggested that Buckingham's next

⁵⁵ *Parliamentary Debates*, XXV (1834), 962 et seq

committee should investigate the increase of cant Sheffield's *Figaro* was nauseated by the report—Buckingham's name made it sick, and he was too conversant with the Koran to be a good Christian A correspondent of *The Iris* enforced the argument that it was impossible to legislate morality into people by pointing out that the Sheffield Quakers had a vault in their meeting-house for the storage of spirits Earlier in the discussion *The True Sun* had expressed the interesting idea that the restriction of the sale of intoxicants was inadvisable because "human life is subject to such manifold wretchedness "⁵⁶

But the committee found a few friends Buckingham's old enemy, *The Sheffield Mercury*, printed the full report and commended the committee for its honest effort to ameliorate the conditions of the poor *The Sheffield Independent* disagreed with some of the recommendations but called the report "an able document" At the time the committee was appointed *The Iris* had replied to those who made fun of it and put their faith in education as a cure for drunkenness, "Education can do wonders—but to a sober man only" Of the metropolitan papers only *The Morning Herald* was sympathetic It observed sorrowfully, "A sad country and a merry House of Commons is a sign of the times" (another observer was similarly impressed by Lord Melbourne's high spirits) and praised the committee

We acknowledge the difficulty of repressing the vice of drunkenness by legislative enactments, yet we do not, therefore, think it useless or absurd to bring the subject under the notice of Parliament We have enough impostors seeking their own ends under the name of political reformers, but to advocates of social reforms no loaves and fishes of the state are offered They are consequently fewer and more sincere, and of all sorts of social reform the most beneficial to society would be the eradication of this fascinating vice ⁵⁷

The report, which occasioned this outburst of satire and anger, has been characterized by a later writer as "the most comprehensive indictment [of the liquor traffic] ever drawn up", in the words of

⁵⁶ *The Spectator*, VII (1834), 756, *The London Times*, September 9, 1834, *John Bull*, August 10, 1834, *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, VI (1834), 573, *Politics for the People*, I (1834), 13, *Figaro*, II (1834), 295, *The True Sun*, March 7, 1834

⁵⁷ *The London Morning Herald*, August 12, 1834, see also the Sheffield papers *The Mercury*, August 9, *The Sheffield Independent*, August 9, and *The Sheffield Iris*, June 10, 1834

the same author "it recommended a heap of measures now recommended as new and brilliant ideas"⁵⁸ Although the committee outlined in detail proposals for dealing with the liquor problem, it did not advocate, as Place would have had the people believe, their legislative coercion. As a matter of fact, the committee accepted the fundamental position of its opponents, namely, that education was the essential means of combating drunkenness, and projected placing the instruments for acquiring instruction in the hands of the people. The primary means of promoting sobriety were schools, libraries, museums, art galleries, walks and parks, and "rational and cheap amusements," which would make it possible for the people to escape from the beer shop and the gin-palace. As part of the course of study in a system of national education Buckingham suggested the presentation of physiological and social data which would show the young the deleterious effects of alcohol—much more effective temperance material than astronomy and political economy.

But with habitual thoroughness Buckingham went further, recommending the regulation of the sale of intoxicants. Wages were no longer to be paid in public houses, he suggested that they be paid early in the morning on market days and in small coins so that the labourers would not find it necessary to go about seeking change. Lodges were to stop holding their meetings in the drinking palaces. Only licensed houses for the sale of liquors were to be permitted, their number was to be strictly limited, in a definite ratio to the population, and they were to be relicensed yearly upon the approval of local authorities. The hours of opening and closing were to be fixed by law, beer shops were to open only one hour on Sunday, and gin shops not at all. Moreover, their doors, like those of all other shops, were to stand wide open so that passers-by could see in. The most extreme recommendation was the prohibition of the distillation and importation of spirituous liquors, Buckingham proposed that the nation should go over to wines and beers, giving the future the opportunity to evolve a temperate nation. As a further aid to temperance he asked for the reduction of duties on tea, coffee, sugar, and soft drinks. Unquestionably these were "Bedlamite" ideas in 1835, but the general principles of the report were neither radical nor unsound. Certainly Buckingham did not intend to compel any one to be sober; he wished only to offer him an easier opportunity for sobriety.

⁵⁸ Arthur Shadwell, *Drink, Temperance, and Legislation* (London, 1912), 41.

Buckingham met the storm of abuse with characteristic combative-ness. He wrote a letter to *The Spectator*, observing sarcastically that it was easier "to laugh" than "to think" and informed its editor that he had been called "a visionary" so often that the epithet no longer frightened him. He was "a pioneer of public opinion" and felt that in time the country would do him justice.⁵⁹

In 1835 he gave notice of three bills for carrying out the recommendations of the report, but only one was introduced.⁶⁰ It proposed to empower local communities to establish walks, baths, play-grounds, halls, theatres, libraries, museums, and art galleries so as "to draw off by innocent pleasurable recreation and instruction, all who can be weaned from habits of drinking." The plan of action, which the local community was to follow, was simple and essentially democratic. Any fifty ratepayers could call a town-meeting, and a two-thirds majority of those attending could authorize the construction of such institutions as they thought desirable. The rate-payers at large were then to elect a committee of twenty-one members, which could borrow money, ten shillings per head of the town's population, and levy an assessment, up to sixpence per pound rental, for raising the funds necessary for the payment of interest and principal. The essential aim of the bill was to give the enlightened minority in a town the opportunity to work for the general improvement of the town's life.

The background of the bill was much deeper than the findings of "the Drunken Committee." As early as 1825 Buckingham had complained against the sedentary habits which modern cities, by making impossible the traditional rural sports, were imposing upon the common people, and in 1833, when Richard Slaney carried a motion for a select committee on public walks, he remarked in *The Parliamentary Review* that the appointment of this committee was "the first step in doing something for those who work." The closing of footpaths imposed new burdens on the poor by increasing the distances they had to walk to and from work, and, as *The London Times* reported, "rankled the hearts of the people" as had few other abuses of power. The Slaney committee recommended the reservation of space as playgrounds for the younger portion of the working class in order "to wean them away from low and

⁵⁹ *The Spectator*, VII (1834), 778.

⁶⁰ *Parliamentary Debates*, XXIX (1835), 577 *et seq.*

debasing pleasures" Indeed, Buckingham's bill was more significant as a measure for providing the masses with opportunities for recreation and cultural advancement than it was as a proposal for the regulation of the liquor traffic, other men had begun to think about the problems of sanitation, housing, and health in the large towns, but he was the pioneer in attempting to deal with them from the standpoint of the cultural life of their inhabitants⁶¹

In the Commons the bill was received with some enthusiasm, but opposition to its financial clauses quickly developed Thomas Tooke, a leading lawyer and a friend of Brougham, objected to the manner in which the tax was to be levied, Buckingham replied by arguing that the tax would be levied more democratically than any other assessment upon the English people But his arguments were to no avail, the Commons had no taste for "meddling legislation" Lord John Russell did not believe in the compulsory establishment of public libraries, Warburton averred that taxation for the support of such institutions would make them unpopular, and John Cam Hobhouse protested that legislation on such matters was silly—at any rate the people had recreation enough Thomas Wakley, a surgeon and the editor of *The Lancet*, and Joseph Pease, the Quaker, spoke in favour of the bill The former regaled the House with some remarks on the ignorance of farmers, "Augh," said they, "we woant ha'na Lard John Rissel! we woant ha'na refarm! we woant ha'na poaap!" After the debates Buckingham told his Sheffield constituents that Tooke was a reformer but no friend of the poor Due to the conservatism of the landed proprietors and the indifference of the Radicals such a measure had no chance of passage, its introduction and advocacy served only to indicate the meaning of "liberal reform"⁶²

Except for a few isolated papers, the press took no notice of the bill A writer in *The Poor Man's Guardian* was convinced that its passage would confer "a lasting benefit on the people of England" Significant praise came from *The British and Foreign Medical Review*, which described the conditions that the bill was meant to ameliorate.

⁶¹ *The Oriental Herald*, VI (1825), 439, *The Parliamentary Review*, I (1833), 213–214, *The London Times*, January 1, 1835, *Report from the Select Committee on Public Walks, *passim**

⁶² *Parliamentary Debates*, XXX (1835), 651 *et seq.*, *The Sheffield Iris*, February 2, 1836

With the exception of good foot-paths along the most frequented public roads in the neighbourhood of great towns, there is the most perfect disregard shown toward all that part of the population which is condemned to take exercise on foot Parks and pleasure-grounds are rigorously locked up, commons are enclosed, foot-paths are interdicted, and the mechanic, who wanders forth on a holiday to breathe the fresh air of the country, finds no spot of green on which to rest his feet, or to see his children run about and gather flowers, and does but exchange the air of the manufactory for the dust of the road Public sports, games, and amusements, there are none, and the close rooms of the ale houses are the resort of the workmen in unemployed hours The refreshment of the bath is unknown to them if they bathe near a town, they are of course liable to punishment, and public baths are not to be found, or, if existing, are only for the richer class ⁶³

Only good, the article concluded, could come from such a law

Buckingham's legislative efforts were fruitless, but his labours were not without result, because they gave a powerful impetus to the young temperance movement, lifting it from a local agitation to a national propaganda His speech before the Commons was printed and distributed to the number of a million copies or more When the Ministry refused his request to circulate the committee's report, as it had done with the Poor Law Commission's findings, he took it upon himself to prepare summaries of the evidence, which were broadcast weekly over the kingdom An edition of the report was prepared for the American public, it was also translated into several continental languages A popular digest of the evidence, prepared at Belfast, played a great part in the development of that Irish sentiment of which Father Mathew had the advantage in his crusade In fact, the report of "the Drunken Committee" was a textbook which worked through many channels to affect the public mind, it marked an epoch in the history of the temperance movement ⁶⁴

⁶³ *The British and Foreign Medical Review*, I (1836), 304, see also *The Poor Man's Guardian*, May 23, 1835

⁶⁴ *Parliamentary Debates*, XXIX (1835), 567, LXVII (1843), 62 Lord Ashley believed that the report of Buckingham's committee had never received a tithe of the attention it deserved, *The British and Foreign Temperance Advocate*, II (1835), 222, *The Dublin Review*, VIII (1840), 461, Samuel Couling, *History of the Temperance Movement* (London, 1862), 82, 279, Dawson Burns, *Temperance History, a Consecutive Narrative of the Rise, Development and Extension of the Temperance Movement* (2 vols, London, 1889), I, 78, Daniel Dorchester, *The Liquor Problem in All Ages* (New York, 1884), 328, *Standard Encyclopaedia of the Alcohol Problem* (6 vols, Westerville, Ohio, 1925), III, 929.

Buckingham's powers as a speaker were brought quickly into the service of the temperance movement. At the close of Parliament he toured the country under the auspices of the British and Foreign Temperance Society, of which he had been made a vice-president. Early in September he was at Sheffield, where he spoke before the newly organized temperance society, to the Labourers' Friends Society, and to several groups of "apron-men." The Mechanics' Institute presented him with a chest of silver in recognition of his support of popular reforms. When he attended the Cutlers' Feast, for the first time in the history of the celebration no spirituous liquors appeared on the board, and an unheard-of thing happened —no one was tipsy when the gathering broke up. At Hull, Bolton, and Manchester he addressed crowded meetings, and in Liverpool, where old acquaintances of the China trade agitation gave him an enthusiastic welcome, he lectured before two large audiences. A month later the burgesses adopted the first regulation of the liquor shops, requiring them to close Sunday mornings. November found the speaker in Scotland, December carried him to Ireland, where the Sunday School teachers of Belfast and the Ulster Temperance Society welcomed him. In February, 1835, he told the people of Dublin that the moderate use of spirits was destructive of the happiness that men ought to enjoy in this world. Meanwhile the membership of the British and Foreign Temperance Society grew from seventy to over ninety thousand, the brewers and distillers began to feel uneasy, and the orator became an international figure, having attracted the attention of the American temperance leaders.

Buckingham's rise to prominence strengthened the teetotalers. In the summer of 1835 the London group formed the British Teetotal Temperance Society and chose him as its first president. A little later the Midland societies organized the British Association for the Promotion of Temperance and made him a vice-president. The British and Foreign Temperance Society opposed these developments, as "short" pledge men, its members believed in abstinence but saw no harm in offering beverages to their guests. Buckingham's London organization, which gained three thousand adherents in less than a year, adopted a "long" pledge.

I do voluntarily promise that I will abstain from ale, porter, wine, ardent spirits, and all intoxicating liquors, and will not give or offer

them to others, except under medical prescription, or in religious ordinance⁶⁵

During the subsequent years of his parliamentary career, he lectured widely in favour of the teetotal cause, and in 1837, as a testimonial of their admiration, the ladies of the Bristol Teetotal Society presented him with a silver knife, fork, and spoon

6 SOCIAL POLITICS, 1833-37

According to *The Dublin University Magazine*, everyone knew that the Reform Bill had been passed in order to revise the taxes, the restoration of the income tax, it said, would be only retributive justice. But the Whigs had no heart for such a programme, they proposed to leave untouched the existing system of levies, which *The Edinburgh Review* assured the country was based upon fair and sound principles. Other persons, however, had different intentions. The landed proprietors proposed the repeal of the malt duty, the merchants and manufacturers insisted upon the abolition of the house and window taxes and supported their demand with riots, the Radicals centred their hopes for the amelioration of the people's distress upon some financial measure. In fact the whole Radical programme, just as in the 1790's, looked toward this result, as Thomas Attwood, spokesman for the Birmingham Political Union, said

What he wanted was Household Suffrage, Triennial Parliaments, and the Vote by Ballot. And his object in these wishes was, that the people might enjoy true liberty, prosperity, and happiness, he wanted them to have beef, bread, and beer⁶⁶

His particular scheme was a deflation of the funds by a measure which would undo the effects of the Resumption Act of 1819

During the 1833 session the Radicals made no less than fifteen attempts to bring about some action looking toward financial

⁶⁵ For accounts of these various developments of 1834 and 1835 see *The Sheffield Iris*, October 7, 1834, *The British and Foreign Temperance Advocate*, I (1834), 235, 262, *The Hibernian Temperance Journal*, I (1835), 66, *The First Report of the New British and Foreign Society for the Suppression of Intemperance* (London, 1837), 14, Daniel Dorchester, *op. cit.*, 325, P T Winskill, *op. cit.*, 111, John Marsh, *Temperance Recollections* (New York, 1866), 51

⁶⁶ *Parliamentary Debates*, XVI (1833), 937

reform and accompanied their efforts with prophesies of disaster if they failed.⁶⁷ William Gillon informed the House that, unless it revised the taxes, the cry for universal suffrage would be raised, William Harvey predicted the passage of a coercion bill for England, Robert Fryer spoke even more ominously, "The country stood now, as it were, upon a Vesuvius, and there must be Reform or Revolution" The rapid growth of the Owenite societies and the trades unions was ample evidence of the forces which even the Radicals feared. But the shifting of the tax burden from the poor to the rich was the extent of their programme of relief for the people. Even Gillon, who spoke with prophetic insight, indicated

⁶⁷ (1) February 14, Hume, two resolutions for the reduction of sinecures and pensions, particularly in the army, defeated by carrying the previous question, 232 ayes, 138 noes (Buckingham) (2) February 18, Cobbett, a motion to consider the stamp and auction taxes on March 1, withdrawn (3) February 21, Hume, a resolution to have the estimates of gross receipts of the public revenues reported to the Commons, withdrawn (4) March 7, Hudson, a motion to reduce all public salaries and superannuations ten per cent and upwards, defeated (division not recorded) (5) March 7, Cobbett, a motion to repeal the stamp taxes, deferred (6) March 21, Thomas Attwood, a motion to appoint a select committee to inquire into the public distress and the means of relieving it, defeated, ayes 158, noes 198 (Buckingham was ill frequently in March and April and consequently did not vote on some of these proposals) (7) March 26, Robinson, a motion for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the repeal of those taxes which press on industry and the substitution of a property tax, defeated, ayes 155 (Buckingham), noes 221 (8) April 22, Thomas Attwood, a motion to inquire into the state of the country, defeated by carrying an amendment to maintain the existing currency standard, ayes 304 (Buckingham), noes 49 (9) May 2, Torrens, a motion to repeal those taxes which press upon capital, lower wages, and decrease profits, defeated without a division (10) May 3, Cobbett, a motion against unequal taxation and for the alteration of the stamp and auction duties so that peers, nobles, and baronets shall pay in proportion to their property, defeated, ayes 70 (Buckingham), noes 238 (11) May 16, Cobbett, a motion for the removal of Peel from the privy council on account of a want of knowledge of finance, defeated, ayes 4, noes 284 (Buckingham) (12) May 17, Whitmore, a resolution to alter the Corn Laws by substituting a moderate fixed duty, defeated, ayes 106 (Buckingham), noes 305 (13) June 18, Fryer, a motion for leave to bring in a bill to amend the Corn Laws, defeated, ayes 47 (Buckingham), noes 73 (14) July 2, Buckingham, a motion for the adoption of the property or income tax and the reduction of the national debt by its conversion into terminable annuities, defeated, ayes 38, noes 57 (15) July 16, Ruthven, a motion that taxation ought to be reduced and sinecures abolished, after the withdrawal of the clause pertaining to the abolition of sinecures, the motion in favour of the abstract principle of tax reduction was carried, ayes 88 (Buckingham), noes 79 See *Parliamentary Debates*, XV (1833), 660-716, 854-873, 1059-1067, XVI (1833), 353-370, 385-387, 918-963, 1072-1119, XVII (1833), 384-462, 469-537, 540-586, 842-846, 913-953, 1277-1324, 1349-1356, XVIII (1833), 984-987, XIX (1833), 4-37, 673-704

the narrowness of the Radical policy when he advised some starving weavers, who brought him a petition asking for the creation of a board to fix their wages, that any interference between employers and employees by the legislature would bring only the worst of consequences

The Radicals, especially Thomas Attwood, Cobbett, and Fielden, drew lurid pictures of the popular distress. The working people bore four-fifths of the taxes, they paid at rates eight or ten or twenty or even forty times (the multiplier varied with the orators) greater than the rich. The labourers gave to the country at least four times as many goods and services as they consumed, and yet the country refused them bread for their families. One half of the labouring population was worn out by double work, the other half had no work at all. Great numbers were crippled by rheumatism before they were forty. Meat would not "keep" over-night in the tainted air of their dwellings. The miseries of poverty were daily torments and nightly agonies to millions, for whom death no longer had any terrors. "The blackest passions were everywhere called into existence."

But among all those who described these evils, only the independent member for Sheffield went beyond a discussion of the forms of misery and a tirade against unequal taxation to state the truly fundamental fact of the unequal distribution of wealth.

Among the causes that had been assigned for the distress which almost all parties now admitted to exist, the one most generally admitted was that of surplus production—and the other, which followed immediately in its train, was surplus population. He believed it was neither, but that a far more intelligible cause might be found in unequal distribution. He conceived, then, that though there might be more goods produced than men could buy, it was not a superabundance of produce, but a deficiency of the means of purchase, that should be corrected, and though there might be more people than could find employment, it was not a superabundance of population, but a deficiency of means, which a better distribution of the existing wealth of the country would give them, that required to be remedied.⁶⁸

Of course the unequal distribution of wealth was familiar to all agitators for reform, as well as to less emotional political economists and social theorists, but they did not state the social problem in such terms, to a generation which paid homage to Adam Smith, Malthus, and Ricardo such a definition seemed absurd. Even the

⁶⁸ *Parliamentary Debates*, XIX (1833), 6

arch-Radical Cobbett was convinced that the distribution of wealth could never be changed, and Bentham in a last testament, *The Constitutional Code*, had reassured his followers that nothing ought ever to be done about the apportionment of riches

No one agreed with Buckingham's explanation of the causes of popular distress. Peel held that the suffering was the result of political disturbance and the uncertainty which existed about the renewal of the East India Company and the Bank Charters. The better Tory, Sir Harry Verney, implied that there was no real misery, because, after all, "there was no country in which justice was so equally distributed between the rich and the poor" Hume, who contended that England's wealth and power rested upon her merchants and manufacturers, insisted that relief would be secured only when Parliament passed measures to remove the burdens from "the moveable capital of the country, by which employment is furnished" Althorp agreed more or less with this view Attwood and Cobbett explained the distress as the result of the operation of the Resumption Act of 1819 and the notorious inequalities of taxation

Buckingham, along with Harvey, Robinson, and Brotherton, agreed with the Radical programme of economy and tax revision but desired to substitute for the existing levies a general property or income tax, which the Radicals opposed. Buckingham also advocated the conversion of the national debt into terminable annuities. He combined the two proposals in one resolution. With Cobbett he argued that the debt had been originally contracted by an irresponsible House and that the money had been squandered in wars opposed to the spread of free and liberal opinions. With Attwood he agreed that the fundholders had profited by the increased value of the currency and that they did not pay a fair share of the taxes. In supporting a progressive income tax he called attention to its simplicity, its justice, and the difficulties of its evasion. All incomes below one hundred pounds should be exempt, and all other taxes, especially those on the commodities used by the poor, should be repealed. In *The Parliamentary Review* he published an example of a blank upon which returns might be made and explained that even the King would be required to render an account of his personal revenues.

The argument on his motion brought out no new opinions, because every important debate raising the issue of popular distress had

brought some discussion of the income tax. Its opponents disliked the tax for exactly the same reason that its advocates insisted upon its adoption, namely, a supposed effect upon the distribution of wealth. Cobbett called the tax "confiscation" and a "levelling measure," and, as several members of the House complained, Althorp never ceased quoting the epithets. The Whig leader also resisted the tax because he believed it destructive of capital and disturbing to trade. Peel held it to be inquisitorial and complimented Althorp for refusing to adopt it. Poulett Thompson, sitting for Manchester, declared that the operation of the tax would put a total and complete stop to the accumulation of property and fix a limit to the fortune of every individual. Serjeant Spankie, with his well-known vigour of thought, saw the tax as "a project of equality," and like all such projects it contained "the seeds of social disorder." What seeds the existing taxation system contained, he did not state, but, if the extent of disorder was any evidence, the seeds of political dissolution were among those which had already sprouted. That the fears, as well as the hopes, inspired by the income tax failed to materialize in no way lessens the significance of its advocacy in 1833, in the readjustment of national finance necessary to the full development of capitalism, its adoption was inevitable, as Whig, Tory, and Radical found out.

When "the advancers" brought in a resolution, Althorp's usual procedure was to make a brief speech belittling the complaint and declaring the time inopportune for the consideration of such a measure. Once in a while he stressed the lateness in the session, as he did in the case of Buckingham's motion, and occasionally he hoped nothing would be done to hinder the freedom of trade. In one notable instance he asked for delay until more information could be obtained. The Whigs loved information, royal commissions and select committees without end poked noses into almost everybody's business. It was a useful work. But Althorp's attempt to stay the course of the Factory Bill by referring it to a committee found the resistance too great to overcome.

This bill, originally sponsored by Oastler and taken over by Lord Ashley when Macaulay defeated Oastler in Leeds, was ultimately accepted in an emaciated form by the Ministers. It was the single measure passed in 1833 affording relief to any part of the working class. Popular agitation, directed by the Tory Evangelicals, compelled its enactment. Although the Radicals expressed a great

diversity of opinions during the debates, they agreed upon one point, namely, that financial reform, not factory reform, was the only means of relieving the people Fryer, who talked of "Revolution," called the bill a delusion, the proper measure was one to reduce the taxes Cobbett described it as a bill to force parents to treat their children more kindly, the real evil was the taxation which ground the poor parents Attwood protested, "If the hours were decreased the children would have to go to the parish" Hume disliked the charges that the manufacturers were cruel and insisted that, if the Corn Laws were repealed, the complaints against the treatment of the children would cease Even Buckingham, who described the bill as "most sensible," thought it began at the wrong end He voted against Althorp's resolution, which was beaten, 169 to 141

In the face of the continuous agitation for tax revision Althorp found his stratagems inadequate The early motions by Hume, Cobbett, Hudson, and Attwood preceded the introduction of the budget, which was such a splendid effort at satisfying every one that it actually pleased no one The landed proprietors were relieved by the reduction of the tax on cheap carts and by the removal of the levy on stewards, bailiffs, and managers The merchants fared better. The duty on tiles, the taxes on newspaper advertising and marine insurance policies, and the assessments on warehousemen, porters, hawkers, and commercial travellers were removed, and the tax on windows in the part of a habitation used as a shop was remitted The manufacturers were granted the abolition of the duty on raw cotton As for the people, they were given the sanitary benefits of a reduction of one half of the tax on soap Inasmuch as the members of the middle class often found it necessary in cases of sickness to borrow a tub from a tinshop in order to give the patient a bath, the remission of this tax was probably not a great stroke of benevolence. The presentation of the Exchequer measure was immediately followed with motions by the landed and trading interests, the former sought the abolition of the malt duty, while the latter desired the complete removal of the house and window taxes When the landed proprietors carried a resolution favourable to their interest, Althorp moved an amendment to the counter-motion of the middle class He took advantage of their mutual opposition to the property and income taxes, offering the House the choice of retaining the malt, house, and window taxes or the

revolutionizing of national finance by adopting a direct tax on wealth and income. The vote on this proposal was a test between the parties, and "the halters" triumphed, 355 to 157. Even "the receders," who had carried the repeal of the malt tax, saw matters in a different light when Althorp offered them the alternative of the income tax.⁶⁹

The budget drove the towns nearly to rebellion and brought a series of heated debates in Parliament. Attwood and Cobbett supported each other in bringing forward motions for currency reform, against unequal taxation, and for Peel's removal from the Privy Council. The veteran Radical's attack upon Peel was the culmination of the bitter antagonism which the struggle for financial reform had engendered, just as the arguments of the Radicals reached back through statistics of prices and wages to the early years after the Napoleonic Wars, so did this resolution recall the strife since the days of the Six Acts and the Resumption Act of 1819. Cobbett and his chief supporter, Fielden, called attention to the fluctuations in prosperity and the decline in prices and wages since 1819, they climaxed their review of these conditions by pointing out Peel's shifts in policy. Peel replied by denying that he was insensible to the distresses of the people, by declaiming upon the scurrility which called him a "cotton weaver," by attacking Cobbett for wishing to inquire into the pedigrees of all landed proprietors, and by quoting poetry,

We grieved, we sighed, we wept, we never blushed before

One can be fairly certain, if Cobbett's inquiry had been made, that there would have been, no doubt, a plethora of blushes. Cobbett found only four supporters for his motion, which was expunged from the journals of the House by a similarly overwhelming vote. Buckingham did not vote with him.⁷⁰

Long before the 1833 session closed, the high hopes of the people had been dashed. In April *The True Sun* declared that the Parliament was playing the masses false, it was a "rickety and crooked" thing. At the end of the session *The Westminster Review*, the Benthamite organ, dubbed it "the session of the shearing of the hogs." When Buckingham commented in *The Parliamentary Review* upon the failure of the measures for financial reform, he

⁶⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, XVII (1833), 326-369, 678-689, 690 *et seq.*, 728-739, 758-837

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 1277-1324

was both bitter and prophetic. Again he insisted upon the need for a better distribution of wealth and argued that, as long as " 'great wealth' whether in land or in funds" was considered the first recommendation for a member of Parliament, there would be no improvement. He called upon "the halters" to contemplate the outcome of their course in a sorry day when, as a result of the just indignation of the people, the higher orders would be more intolerably distressed than the lower orders were now, to hasten the cause of peaceful reform he suggested the organization of a General Reform Association with branches in every town. After the close of the session, when he replied to the welcome given him by the sailors of Sunderland, he called upon them for further support because, as he said, an independent member was helpless if not backed by the people.¹¹

But others shared less carping, as well as less apprehensive, opinions. *The Edinburgh Review* announced, in answer to Attwood and Fielden, that "the extraordinary prevalence of distress has been completely disproved." The Whig gambler, Greville, after observing that Hume cut no figure in the Parliament and that "Cobbett, Silk Buckingham, Roebuck, and such men soon found their level and sunk into insignificance," remarked that the session turned out to be quite like all others, he concluded with the restful sentiment, "The world seems in a state of repose." *The Dublin University Magazine* found the repose sweet and gave a sigh of relief, "Well! revolution does not progress as rapidly as we expected." The moderation of the Whigs had proved to be "almighty."

The parliamentary battle for financial reform began again on the opening day of the 1834 session. In the address from the Throne the King lamented the continued distress among the proprietors of land, though, in other respects, the country was tranquil, and commerce and industry were thriving, with fine prospects for progressive improvement. The Whig orators who seconded the address in the Commons called attention to the excessive burden of taxation which agriculture bore, emphasized the injurious operation of the Poor Laws, and recommended the enactment of laws that would allow the farmer to secure a fair return on his capital. They also remarked upon the prosperity of industry. The cotton manufac-

¹¹ *The Parliamentary Review*, III (1833), 93, IV (1833), 108, *The Sheffield Iris*, November 5, 1833.

ture was flourishing The new railroads were stimulating the demand for iron And wages had uniformly risen where machinery had been efficiently applied

All this was a red flag to the Radicals The new Westminster member, Colonel Evans, paid his respects to the hundred or more placemen, sinecurists, and pensioners, who sat back of the Ministers, and demanded the repeal of the house and window taxes But Hume led the charge by moving an amendment which called for the parliamentary consideration of the taxes and the Corn Laws He deplored the fact that there was not one word from the Throne about relief for "tax-ridden England" The Corn Laws were an outrageous monopoly The Noble Lords gave promises and nothing more The country was "humbugged" Althorp replied to this fierce attack by promising to act in "due season" and by reiterating the pledges to correct municipal, ecclesiastical, and the Poor Law abuses "And what more could the Honourable Member desire?" Hume gathered a bare thirty-nine votes for the amendment, and one of them was Buckingham's Greville noted in his diary that no session had ever begun with such apathy

When Althorp introduced the budget, he called attention to the reduction of the taxes he had already brought about—£1,545,000 in 1833. He then proposed the commutation of the tithes, the alteration of the poor rates, and the repeal of the house tax, the last as an adjustment in favour of the "trading interest" The debate quickly became acrimonious Cobbett favoured relief for agriculture but not at the expense of the poor, Peel complained that the "patient and submissive agriculturists got nothing" because the amendment of the Poor Law would give no more relief to them than it did to the manufacturers The bitter opponents agreed for once each argued that the commutation of the tithes would not benefit the farmers On the other hand Hume declared that nothing could be more beneficial to the country than the commutation of the tithes because they were "the greatest possible check to the employ of that superabundant capital which existed in the country", at the same time he defended the fundholders and made light of the distress of the landed proprietors, "How unfortunate indeed was that interest! Why, they had a monopoly of the food of the country by the aid of the oppressive tax on corn" After denying that the repeal of the Corn Laws would cheapen the price of food and asserting that, on the contrary, it would lead to the unemploy-

ment of the working class, Cutlar Fergusson described the income tax as odious and hoped that no future government would ever have recourse to it. Robinson, Attwood, and Maxwell, who called himself "a friend of the poor," protested against relieving the fundholders, the stock-jobbers, and the owners of large houses, when nothing was done for the working men. Daniel W. Harvey, whom, along with Buckingham, *The True Sun* found to be one of the most useful members of Parliament, insisted that Althorp had dodged the issue, leaving it to be fought out between the representatives of the landed interests and the manufacturing districts.

The main engagement between the two propertied interests developed when Hume moved for a select committee to consider replacing the sliding scale of corn duties with a moderate fixed duty. Hume pleaded his case entirely from the standpoint of industrial capitalism—the wealth and power of the country arose from, and must always depend upon, her manufactures, the principal obstacle to the extended sale of manufactures was the high price of food for the people, which kept up the cost of production, the only way to lower the cost of production was to decrease wages, and this could be done only by lowering the price of food, and the only goods which other nations could give in return for manufactures was corn. Hume's conclusions were obvious by repealing the bread tax, England might lower the cost of production, quadruple the output of the factories, and become "the manufacturer of the whole world." His views as to what would happen to the people were also explicit—the expansion of production would increase the demand for labour, wages would be steadied, and the surplus of workers in agriculture would be absorbed by industry. Torrens, who seconded the resolution, painted an improved prospect for agriculture as a result of the increase of the manufacturing population, the rental of the country would be doubled. Sir James Graham, speaking for the landlords, saw the situation in the opposite light—the repeal of the Corn Laws would throw the agricultural population out of work, they would cease to consume goods, the shopkeepers would suffer, the demand for manufactures would decline, and the ultimate effect would be the destruction of all manufactures by virtue of having destroyed the home market. He also hinted at a worse disaster, remembering no doubt the recent events of 1830 once the agricultural labourers were reduced to new deprivations, their discontent would endanger all the property of the country.

Graham appealed to Cobbett to verify the assertion that "the iron hands of the ploughman" could not be taught to spin; the absorption of the agricultural workers into industry was an idle dream of the economists. And the final contention, although it did not come from the First Lord of the Admiralty, was no less forceful. England was not to be starved into submission by a squadron of gun brigs. Hume's motion was lost by a vote almost identical with that which had defeated the income tax in 1833, 312 to 155, and again Buckingham was with the minority.⁷²

After this debate nothing was clearer than the way in which the proprietary groups regarded the working class. It was a pawn in the game of economic aggrandizement, and in order to give the pawn full mobility they united to pass the Poor Law Amendment Act. Althorp introduced the amendment as a measure for the relief of agriculture—by decreasing the poor rates—but the spokesmen for the industrial capitalists, who desired a large supply of labour in a fluid market, were its most ardent advocates. The Poor Law Commissioners, inspired by the economist, Nassau Senior, and led by the devout Benthamite, Edwin Chadwick, had reported the conviction that no country can retain its prosperity or even its civilization if every man, no matter what his economic conduct may be, is ensured a comfortable subsistence. They recommended the restoration of what *The Atlas* derisively called "the liberty to starve." The quest for a job was to become the mainspring of the labourer's conduct, and a national system of administration was necessary to maintain a uniform basis for his action, that is, the equalization of the opportunity to starve. Hume insisted that the whole success of the system depended upon the maintenance of the discipline of the workhouses, where, according to the commissioners, life was to be so hard that only a starving man would endure it. Colonel Torrens applauded the amendment as the one means of increasing the productive powers of the country and declared that those who opposed it were the enemies of the people. Bentham's Panopticon turned out to be a national system of workhouses, with poor law commissioners exercising the "rational control," and every working man's domicile became a "frugality inn." Unfortunately the beds had no attachments for the babies, and all too often there were no beds for the parents.

In justice to the Radical supporters of the Poor Law Amendment

⁷² *Parliamentary Debates*, XXI (1834), 1201 *et seq.*, 1223 *et seq.*, 1346.

Act, it should be remembered that it was the maladministration of the existing law that had debased the agricultural workers and that, consistent with their theory of society, the Radicals unflinchingly supported the repeal of the Corn Laws and the creation of a national system of education which would give to the labourer the conditions necessary for the success of his efforts at self-advancement. The Poor Law Amendment Act was written in terms of social justice as the political economists and Benthamites understood it. To the labourer were restored Poor Richard's virtues—self-help, thrift, and ambition to rise—and Massachusetts and Pennsylvania were cited as examples of their successful operation. The true sycophants were the landed proprietors who supported the Poor Law Amendment Act but resisted the repeal of the Corn Laws, because in each case such conduct served their immediate selfish interests. They had no theory of society to justify their sophistries.

It was a strange combination of Radicals, Tories, and Evangelicals which resisted the Whig legion and the Benthamite phalanx. Cobbett, who looked backward to the felicity of his grandfather's countryside and forward to the early Radical Utopia for "Johnny Raw," was joined by such men as Thomas Attwood, John Fielden, Sir Charles Burrell, and the "Liberal Reformer" from Sheffield in decrying the reduction of the people to a diet of potatoes and salt, "to live like dogs upon garbage." Cobbett's most audacious act was to move the application of the bill to the persons on the pension list no pensioner whose relatives possessed property and were able to support him was to continue to receive any part of the people's money. Buckingham voted for the proposal. Cobbett, Attwood, and Fielden argued that the right of the poor man to relief was every bit as sound as the right of a gentleman to his lands, for both rights had come into existence in the sixteenth century when the medieval church was despoiled. Burrell suggested that a starving man might adopt a course of action not in accord with public safety. Buckingham's opposition to the law rested upon somewhat different grounds.

When men are embarked on the ocean, and a certain number are confined in a ship, if the provisions and water fall short, as compared with the consumers, the justice of calling upon each to make a sacrifice of his own portion for the benefit of the whole is never disputed, and in any reduction of the allowance of food and water, it would be thought scandalous and inhuman for the officers not to submit to the same.

amount of reduction as the men. If by picking up a ship's crew at sea by taking them from a sinking vessel, the number of consumers are doubled, and still further reductions are required, in that case also, all are called upon to make a proportionate sacrifice. In both these cases the line of conduct pursued is founded on the same great principle, namely, the *absolute right*, by the first law of nature, and the universal sense of justice, to subsistence, of which right no man can be justly deprived but for the commission of a crime which would warrant the putting him out of existence altogether.

The aged, the sick, and the infirm, who are unable to subsist themselves, and equally unable to give anything in return for the cost of their subsistence to others, are entitled to the protection and support of the community, without any other condition than that of their actual helplessness, by whatever causes produced. The young, and healthy, and able-bodied, who suffer want merely because they are *unable*, however willing, to obtain employment, are equally entitled to be fed and subsisted by the community. A third class will be found who are not totally unable to provide for themselves, as the former, nor wholly without work, as the latter, and to whom, therefore, a slight addition to their existing means, and that, too, perhaps, continued for a short period, would be all that would be required.

It is clear, then, that for these three classes a very different sort of provision would be needed. For the first, asylums and hospitals, maintained at the expense of the country, so as to equalize the burden instead of pressing too severely on particular parishes. For the second, labour in public works should be devised, by competent directors, and these of decided public utility, in which there should be no difficulty whatever if set about with earnestness and determination. For the third, all that is wanted is a rigidly-searching examination into the circumstances of each particular case, and a due care in the administration of the parochial funds.⁷³

On many other occasions Buckingham compared society with a ship and its crew, drawing from the comparisons principles which looked to common rather than to individual interests. Poor relief was not a matter of traditional rights, nor a device to maintain public order, but an obligation which society owed to each of its members in his time of need.

Meanwhile, as the politicians bickered, the masses made the first attempt to take control of their own affairs. The years 1833 and 1834 witnessed a great wave of Owenite and trades union activities which aimed at the quick and complete overthrow of capitalism. The Owenite societies operated upon the principle of co-operative

⁷³ *The Parliamentary Review*, I (1834), 601, *Parliamentary Debates*, XXIII (1834), 1049, XXIV (1834), 544, XXV (1834), 1224.

production and distribution, the trades unions employed collective bargaining and the strike, but, as the two movements grew, they came closer together, until late in 1833 they were more or less united. At that time the Birmingham Builders' Trades Union, which proposed to take over the construction operations in that city and to bring about a nationalization of their industry after making alliances with other local unions, set forth its aims. As a statement of the conception of social policy then developing among the working masses the aims deserve quotation:

To obtain and secure sufficient wages and full employment for every member of the body

To provide for themselves schools, for instruction in all branches of the art of building, and also a good, sound, and practical education for their children

To encourage in themselves habits of temperance, peace, order, industry, charity, and good will, and to ensure a competent provision against times of sickness and accident, and a comfortable retirement for the old aged and infirm.⁷⁴

In commenting upon these fearful events the Radical *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* pleaded for governmental action before it was too late and warned that two thousand horse would not do, because a formidable confederacy, which was irresistible in the industrial cities, existed among the people.

The climax of these popular movements came early in the year. Owen formed the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union, which enrolled five hundred thousand members and aimed at nothing less than the unionization of all industry on the basis of co-operation. When thirty thousand workers marched into London to protest against the deportation of the Dorsetshire labourers, *The Pioneer* hailed the event as marking an epoch in history "Labour put on its hat and marched towards the throne." *The Poor Man's Guardian* pointed to the American struggle against the Second United States Bank and proclaimed a world-wide class war between the workers and the capitalists. *Blackwood's Magazine* also called attention to America, observing in New York the separation of the classes, the Tory journal cursed "the town directed legislation of the last fifteen years," damned that combination of free trade and democratic principles which had reduced the people to a state of unprecedented misery, and looked with horror at the

⁷⁴ *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, IV (1833-34), 394.

manufacturing classes taking matters into their own hands. *The Atlas*, a mildly Liberal sheet, called upon the higher and middle classes to realize that they and their property stood on the edge of a fearful precipice from which one hostile movement of the labouring population would hurl them into revolution and destruction. And there gathered in London a second parliament to do the work which the body sitting in Westminster refused to do.

The passage of the Poor Law Amendment Act added fuel to the flames, especially in the industrial areas, and the anger of the lower classes increased. One of Buckingham's Sheffield constituents snarled that, while the aristocrats were cursing with "holy Malthus" the increase of population, they were also peopling the country with bastards. He proposed a bill for the better regulation of the privileged orders, each year a centralized jury was to examine into their conduct, and seven years' transportation was to be their punishment for lying. "The rights of the poor," the author said, "are divine rights." Cobbett and Fielden and the Tory Evangelicals, Oastler and Stephens, co-operated in organizing a vigorous agitation against the workhouses. The opposition to the inauguration of the new system was so powerful that the commissioners were obliged to move slowly, it was not until 1837 that a serious effort was made to set up the workhouses in the north, and then riots greeted the attempt.

But the masses encountered a stubborn resistance to their drive for economic security. The Whig politicians, anxious to demonstrate that Whig reform was respectable, looked askance at public demonstrations and large deputations to the Home Office. They prosecuted the editors of *The True Sun* for advising the people not to pay taxes and for the greater crime of bringing the House of Commons into contempt, the Whigs had no sense of humour. Lord Melbourne refused to receive the petitioners who asked for the release of the Dorsetshire labourers, and the King never replied to the petition. The seizure, conviction, and transportation of these men was the Government's reply to the trades unions, a law against taking secret oaths, which had been passed during the anti-Jacobin crusade of the 1790's, was raised against them. Lord Howick, after declaring that the Dorsetshire labourers were not simple and ignorant men, as their apologists claimed because one of them was a Methodist preacher, accused them of having invaded "the first principles of the rights of industry" in order to prevent men from selling their labour upon the terms they thought fit. Howick

was an able defender of "the right to starve" Lord Melbourne was more practical, he gave the advice which, under the common law, brought the prosecution of pickets and even of those men who dared to write to their employers asking for higher wages

"The self-made men" were soon in control of the situation Lockouts, supported by the militia, broke the strikes, and "the manufacturers' bond"—the yellow dog contract of twentieth-century United States—weakened the unions The anti-religious bias of Owen, which irritated the large Evangelical section of the working class, and the over-ambitious projects of the Owenite societies and trades unions also contributed to the sudden disruption of the popular movement By August, 1834, the grand schemes for a national reorganization of society were at an end, leaving only the anger at the new Poor Law to keep the people more than usually aroused, and by the end of the year the shift of the popular interest from economic organization to political action was well under way Indeed, on the third day of the new year, Robert Owen proposed to offer himself for Parliament as "the man of vision" necessary to save the country from "the strife of faction" that was "murdering the happiness of the human race" ⁷⁵

At that Owen was right about "the strife of faction" With tears in his eyes Earl Grey had gone down to the Lords to tell them that he was no longer a Minister of the Crown, and Lord Melbourne, uncompromisingly hostile to the Radicals but unable to govern without their support, had become Premier Buckingham thought his rise to power was like one of those events which mark the decay of nations Melbourne was in office from July to November, then Peel came hurriedly home from Rome to succeed him, and shortly afterwards there were great crowds and long speeches in Paradise Square Parker was unopposed, but the publicans, remembering "the Drunken Committee," brought out Bailey against Buckingham, who talked of "a crisis" "What good is reform if Parliament is controlled by those who resist reform?" Parker invited the electors to look east—"monopoly is gone"—and to look west—"slavery is gone", but he was not so anxious for them to look at things nearer home, he proposed to deal only with "recognized abuses" Above all he was devoted to "social order" The weather was bad, the colours of the candidates were dragged in the mud, and at the end of the first day of the poll Bailey was dangerously near to beating

⁷⁵ *The Poor Man's Guardian*, January 3, 1835

the "Liberal Reformer" But a twenty-four hour drive, which netted him 995 "plumpers" (four times as many as Parker's), carried him over The electioneering in the campaign of 1835 was the most violent England had ever seen, and Greville won fifty-five pounds betting on the Whigs But Peel stayed in office until April ⁷⁶

As a result of these events of 1834 and the early days of 1835, the movements for socio-economic reform reached an impasse Both the Radicals and the people had failed, and the Whigs and Tories were either hostile to change or unprepared to act In the Tamworth Manifesto, Peel had abdicated the Tory resistance to reform and had promised "a careful review of civil and ecclesiastical institutions undertaken in a friendly manner, combining, with firm maintenance of established rights, the correction of proved grievances and the redress of real grievances," but what all this meant, no one in 1835—not even Peel—knew In the debate on the King's address he made it clear that it did mean resistance to "outside pressure," but later he was to have some experience with that The Whigs were still hopelessly confused, they had amassed almost as much information as Bentham but had not arrived at his certainty of thought Also they had "out-Hunted Hunt and out-Cobbetted Cobbett," and now these two gentlemen were dead What were the Whigs to do? "Nothing," said Lord Melbourne, and Poulett Thompson, the new President of the Board of Trade, concurred It was the heyday of *laissez-faire* Lord John Russell believed that manhood suffrage would keep clever men out of Parliament, and so he opposed it nevertheless Macaulay, who had gone out to India at ten thousand pounds a year with twelve thousand pounds more for his outfit as the new "law-member" of the Governor-General's Council, retained his faith in human perfectibility In seconding the 1836 speech from the Throne, Parker of Sheffield praised the Poor Laws, complimented "the unhappy serfs" who had been elevated to the estate of "manly and independent labourers," and described prosperity as being in its infancy As a matter of fact, Whiggery was in its dotage, after 1836 there were deficits for five consecutive years

⁷⁶ The total vote was 1,607 for Parker, 1,554 for Buckingham, and 1,434 for Bailey See *The Sheffield Iris*, January 6 and 13, 1835, and *The Sheffield Independent*, January 10 and 17, 1835, *Chapters in the Political History of Sheffield*, 14, and *The Poll Book containing the proceedings previous to and on the day of Nomination, also, a List of Persons Entitled to vote at the Election of members for the Borough of Sheffield January 9-10, 1835, passim*

The Radicals prospered no more than the Whigs or the Tories. As John Stuart Mill sorrowfully wrote in his *Autobiography*, the whole Radical party was a disappointment. After the defeat of Hume's Corn Law resolution there was an abortive movement to form a "liberal," or, as Buckingham said, "a democratic" party. Hume, Scholefield, Buckingham, and several others attempted to hold regular meetings and organize concerted action. But their efforts resulted only in the formation of the Westminster Club, which quickly failed. The entrance fee was set at fifty guineas, and, as Roebuck observed, there were "precious few entrances." In *The Parliamentary Review* Buckingham asked for the union of the "advancers," whose irreducible number he placed at fifty, and their agreement upon an agenda of reform. He recommended that they confine their efforts to the support of strictly Radical measures, such as tax revision, the repeal of the Corn Laws, the ballot, a national system of education, and triennial Parliaments. He had had enough experience as an advocate of less orthodox measures to know that to propose them would only destroy the unity which he desired. In judging the men available for the leadership of the new party, he thought Hume too lacking in cordiality, Warburton too austere, and Grote too indifferent in zeal—he became an historian—and unskilful in tactics, he found in Daniel W. Harvey's affability, eloquence, and talent for stating cases the qualities necessary in the head of an opposition to the lethargic Whigs.⁷⁷

The failure of this attempt at unity left the Radicals at loose ends, and the result was—after 1834—a series of random movements lacking all tactical direction. In Parliament the out-and-out Philosophical Radicals, whose number was increased by the 1835 election, kept bringing forward motions in favour of the stock reforms—economy, the ballot, and so forth. But the centre of significant activity was transferred to the country where, under the stress of the popular antagonism to the Poor Law Amendment Act, three separate agitations got under way. They were the roots of the great movements which taught Peel the meaning of "outside pressure."

The first blast of the new agitation struck the House of Lords, which, after the 1835 strengthening of the Tories in the Commons, displayed a firmer resistance to reform. In the Upper House the Tory lords defeated the measures of the Ministers, in the Lower

⁷⁷ *The Parliamentary Review*, V (1834), 87-90.

House the Ministers with the support of Tory votes beat Radical proposals, the Radicals fumed and appealed to the country. Such periodicals as *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* and *The Westminster Review* carried violent articles, in the latter "Tear'em" Roebuck gave vent to his sarcasm, "Caligula had made his horse a consul, perhaps a less injurious appointment than that which renders a narrow-minded and irresponsible oligarchy lords paramount of the fortunes of their countrymen." But such sentiments were not new to Buckingham. In 1833 he had insisted that a reform in the House of Lords was necessary and talked of a collision between it and the people, in 1834 he had looked forward to the abolition of the hereditary legislators and suggested a rule of progressive poverty for the Lords Spiritual, with a diet of roots, herbs, and water for Archbishops. Two years later he was telling his constituents that two houses in a legislature were as useless as two town councils, or two juries, or two courts-martial, or two kings.⁷⁸ At the same time Feargus O'Connor, who had been sent north by the Marylebone Radical Association, was laying the first stones in the foundation of the Chartist Movement. Peel was debating with himself the best means for saving "the Corinthian capitol," and Lord John Russell agreed that it ought to be saved, there was good reason for their concern, for *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* reported that the demand for peerage reform was universal.

As early as 1834 Buckingham had noted with approval the appearance of Anti-Corn Law Associations in various parts of the country, they were the successors to his associations for the abolition of the China monopoly. At Dundee in Scotland as many as fifteen thousand people gathered to form such an organization, and the petitions from London and Glasgow which supported Hume's plea for Corn Law revision together carried over ninety thousand names. In 1836 this developing opposition to the bread-tax resulted in the formation of the Anti-Corn Law Association, the predecessor of the Anti-Corn Law League. Twenty-two members of Parliament and many country Radicals, including Ebenezer Elliott and Samuel Bailey of Sheffield, were the backbone of the organization. Buckingham was a member of the original committee.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ *The Parliamentary Review*, VI (1834), 1037, *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, new series, III (1836), 680, *The Sheffield Iris*, February 2, 1836.

⁷⁹ *The Parliamentary Review*, V (1834), 57, Archibald Prentice, *The History of the Anti-Corn Law League* (London, 1853), 49.

Chartism was working-class Radicalism In 1836 a pamphlet, circulated by the London Working Men's Association, *The Rotten House of Commons*, described Parliament as a place of struggle between money and land, with the two united against the people Its author called attention to the fact that only 839,519 men in an adult male population of 6,023,752 could vote, and stressed the even more glaring fact that a majority of the Commons was elected by 151,492 electors The primary demand of the Chartists was for manhood suffrage, the other "points" sought the creation of those political conditions which would give the people a complete control over the Government in order to carry out the Radical programme of removing all the restrictions upon liberty and of relieving the distress of the people by inaugurating the financial reforms which the Whigs had refused to accept William Lovett, James Watson, and Feargus O'Connor were the successors of Hunt and Cobbett Place, who helped to draw up "the Charter," had been the prime figure in bringing about the repeal of the laws against combinations, but he did not believe that trades unions would exist in that future society where all oppression—"the cement of combinations"—would cease to exist, there, all would be as orderly as a Quaker could desire The parliamentary spokesmen of the agitation—Attwood and Fielden—were old school Radicals, remarkable for having retained that spark of benevolence—"man's duty to man," according to Paine—that had disappeared when eighteenth-century Radicalism fused with Benthamism and political economy But the economic order of industrial capitalism demanded a more comprehensive definition of liberty than that begotten by sentimentalizing about the state of nature, the goodness of man, the power of reason and the iniquities of aristocrats There were new iniquities, and the state of nature was gone, as for goodness and reason, they were contradictory (see Brougham on the evils of charity).

Buckingham was a "Liberal Reformer," and his conception of social policy was not in agreement with those about which his colleagues quarrelled, nor was it in entire harmony with those over which the country was becoming excited He had peculiar notions which deserve examination and whose significance is plain only as they are seen as a whole against the background of developing English politics

He supported the Radical proposals for political reform—the repeal of the Septennial Act, the removal of the Bishops from the

House of Lords, the improvement of the registry of the electors, the reform of the borough franchise, the publication of the divisions and the debates, the vote by ballot, and, astonishingly, the admission of women to the galleries. This was a serious matter in 1833, John Cam Hobhouse thought it "most indecent to see highbred females present during debates, and when he saw them in the House of Lords he had often to shudder." But James Silk was not so easily disturbed (he had seen the tattooed beauties of Bagdad), not only did he argue for woman's privilege to attend the debates, but also he vindicated her capacity to make political judgments and her right to be interested in political action. If John Stuart Mill in the 'seventies first proposed in the Commons the enfranchisement of woman, Buckingham in the 'thirties first declared there her political capacity. He also had the audacity to argue for the complete abolition of capital punishment.⁸⁰

He stood for an extension of the franchise on the basis of an educational qualification and would have given the vote to every man who could read.⁸¹ This attitude toward the franchise had its roots in his conception of public opinion as the directing force in government. The instruments of the people were the tongue, the pen, the platform, and the press, and he believed that every man should use them, moreover, he insisted that Ministers and representatives should respect their obligation to obey the public voice. When the resolution for the ballot was lost, he complained that, if all those who had been pledged to it during the election had fulfilled their promises, the motion would have carried. On another occasion he protested that the Ministers could not act for the country because they had no way of knowing the opinion of the humbler classes. Never were the cant and hypocrisy of politicians better exposed than in his remarks upon the repeal of the Septennial Act.

To me it appears that popular clamour and public opinion are convertible terms, and each is used not according to any rule for testing the one or the other, but according to the wishes of the party using it. If, for instance, the voice of the multitude is raised strongly in favour of any measure of which the speaker approves, and this voice

⁸⁰ *Parliamentary Debates*, XV (1833), 1158, XXXV (1836), 1077 *et seq.*

⁸¹ *The Sheffield Iris*, February 2, 1836, July 25, 1837, J. S. Buckingham, *Evils and Remedies of the Present System of Popular Elections, with a sketch of the Qualifications and Duties of Representatives and Constituents* (London, 1841), *passim*.

is expressed with ever so much force or strength, as in the case of the Reform Bill, it is then called "enlightened public opinion," and is triumphantly referred to as proof of the absolute necessity of deferring to that opinion and adopting the measure proposed. If, on the contrary, the voice of the multitude is raised strongly against any measure for which the Speaker approves, such, for instance, as the Poor Law Amendment Bill, then, as if by the wand of the magician, this "enlightened public opinion" is instantly transformed into "vulgar and unmeaning clamour," though it is the same public who speaks—the same meetings that assemble—the same judgments that resolve—the same Press that gives publicity, in both cases. When the popular gale blows in favour of the orator's views, it is then *Vox populi, vox Dei*, and is bowed down to, in a homage both ardent and sincere, but when the gale is adverse, the scene becomes entirely changed, and all the veneration before expressed for public intelligence and public virtue, is turned to hatred, scorn, and contempt. Sir, I would seek no further explanation of our duties than that which is conveyed in the very term by which we are designated. We are sent here as the Representatives of the people. How can we possibly represent them, without respecting and giving expression to their will?⁸²

Certainly this view of the matter was quite different from that expressed by the Conservative Lord Sandon, "The Reform bill was not so much intended to give public opinion a useful and efficient control over the measures of the ministers of the crown as to decide who those ministers should be." The vociferous Radicals were not much more democratic than the traditionally minded Whigs and Tories. "To tell the people what they ought to do is one thing, to see them acting for themselves was quite another, it was usurpation, an impertinence." But more remarkable than the expression of such ideas was Buckingham's action upon them for once words and conduct were in agreement. After each session of Parliament he journeyed to Sheffield in order to meet his constituents face to face, to explain his conduct, and to discuss the lines of action he would take during the next session. He advocated that the people call upon all their representatives to make similar explanations. His political ideal was an informed electorate whose duly chosen advocates fulfilled the obligation of carrying out the expressed convictions of their constituents to him "outside pressure" meant the voice of the people and ought to be respected.⁸³

This faith in the people was also reflected in his attitude toward

⁸² *Parliamentary Debates*, XXIII (1834), 1053

⁸³ *The Sheffield Iris*, September 17, 1833, September 9, 1834, February 2, 1836, August 30, 1836

those measures which aimed to complete the establishment of civil and religious liberty. He supported the removal of all restrictions on the expression of opinion, voting for motions to repeal the taxes on knowledge, to admit dissenters to degrees at Oxford and Cambridge, to remove all limitations upon religious assemblies, and to extend political rights to Jews, a measure which the Tories resisted because England was "a most Christian country." The single bill which he sponsored that became a law reduced the number of copies of a book necessary for securing a copyright from eleven to five. He also advocated the complete separation of church and state. In 1834 he spoke at the first public meeting ever held in London to agitate this question. And he opposed strengthening the militia because it could be used to overawe the people.⁸⁴

An even clearer expression of his democratic idealism was his support of a national system of secular education. John Stuart Mill praised Roebuck for introducing the 1833 motion for the establishment of such a system, asserting that nothing equal to this was done by any other individual in the Parliament. Buckingham, however, deserved some of the approval, because Roebuck, after giving notice of his motion, withdrew it and brought it forward again only after Buckingham gave notice of a similar resolution.⁸⁵

The creation of a state-supported system of education was a fundamental measure in the Radical programme. Hume mentioned it in his comments on taxation, drunkenness, and poverty. Roebuck's speech stated the Radical argument in detail. Ignorance is the cause of crime and poverty, in providing for the education of the people, the government performs its first function, that of preventing evil and promoting good. Education alone makes it possible for the people to understand what circumstances promote happiness and what government can and cannot do to alter such circumstances, education is the first support of individual effort. The criminal code, prison discipline, and the Poor Laws are symptoms of a lack of education. Only an educated people can be an "industrious, honest, tolerant, and happy people." In the Benthamite calculus of happiness reason could not function without knowledge, and the state was obligated to provide its citizens with the opportunity to acquire

⁸⁴ *The Parliamentary Review*, V (1834), 617, *Parliamentary Debates*, XVIII (1833), 59, XXIII (1834), 746, 1218, 1222, XXV (1834), 656, *The House of Commons Journal*, XCI (1836), 339, 833, 842, 6 and 7 Wm IV, c 110.

⁸⁵ J. S. Mill, *Autobiography* (London, 1873), 137, *The Sheffield Iris*, September 17, 1833.

information In accordance with Bentham's conception of political organization, the Radicals proposed a centralized administration of a national school system, with a Cabinet Minister to supervise its operation, the Panopticon was to be established in another of its functions.

The arguments against a national system of secular schools revealed the conflicting conceptions of social policy which were struggling for dominance in English life, especially did the arguments exhibit the current attitudes toward the people Althorp's grant for the building of school-houses was only a gesture recognizing the existence of the problem, he believed that, due to the difficulties in finding out the number of school-houses needed, it would be almost impossible to create a national system of schools (The Poor Law Commissioners discovered the number of workhouses necessary for the inculcation of the virtues of thrift and frugality, but that, of course, was a different matter) Howick expressed the Whig theory of education when he remarked that the people should be instructed not in a learning hard to acquire but in their interests and duties in society This, of course, was also Lord Ashley's view The Tories even disliked the new Mechanics' Institutes because they made the workers "ungovernable", the aristocrats generally favoured an education which would render the people "patient, humble, and moral" and relieve them of "the hardship of their present lot by the prospect of a bright eternity." The Whigs and Tories advocated the Church's control of the schools, the nonconformists objected because they feared ecclesiastical domination O'Connell attacked a national system of secular schools as a French device to unchristianize the country; Peel thought the creation of such a system would mean the end of the Church and probably of all religious feeling At any rate in a "free country like England" state control was probably undesirable Lord John Russell feared to embark on a policy of state-supported education because such action would dampen the fine principle of voluntary support, while Lord Ellenborough was apprehensive lest the support of schools by "compulsory rate would take away from the poor man that sense of gratitude which is desirable he possess, when duties are done by those he should look to", the Whig and Tory gentlemen agreed that the Church should keep its compulsory rates—the ecclesiastics were one thing and the people another Confronted with all these fears, *The London Times* bravely asserted that the creation of training-

schools for teachers seemed "safe" But no one was more hostile to the plan of a state-supported system of compulsory education than the old Radical Cobbett He described the increasing drunkenness and crime and argued that education would do no good, Althorp opposed this view, as did also Brotherton, who contended that without tax revision, education was useless Cobbett continued his argument in picturesque assertions Labourers would be raised above their jobs, teachers were "coxcombs", schoolboys were great eating and drinking and guzzling louts (who was to support them while they went to school until they were fifteen?), and they learned nothing but "the habits of idleness" He wanted "a good people, not a gabbling people"⁸⁶

Buckingham's answer to these arguments was both a denunciation of their logic and a statement of what a system of public education might mean

[The benefits of education] are not intended exclusively for the rich and the powerful, every individual, whether born in the highest or lowest station, possesses an undoubted right to them We all come into the world physically helpless and weak, the richest as well as the poorest, and we contend that one has as legitimate a claim as another to the amelioration and improvement of his condition Hence, to withhold the benefits of a good education from the offspring of the humblest parents, is a criminal dereliction of a positive duty, and a sin, not only against religion, and the dictates of an enlightened policy, but against our common humanity

How will the anti-educationists startle at a position so indiscriminately applied!—how will they rejoice at the bold and sweeping annunciation! But if they imagine that we mean to apply this principle to all classes without modification, they mistake our object and our views It is only as regards one class of benefits that we contend for their indiscriminate diffusion We contend, that that knowledge which tends to the comfort, health, and improvement of the body, should be equally and impartially dispensed to all members of the community, while the peculiar duties appropriated to the cultivation of the mind may be allowed to differ in the degree and extent of their application to the particular circumstances of the individual to be educated This

⁸⁶ *Parliamentary Debates*, XV (1833), 76, XVI (1833), 638, XVII (1833), 592, XX (1833), 167, 169, 173, XXIII (1834), 1129, XXIV (1834), 123, 131 *et seq.*, *The Parliamentary Review*, V (1834), 614, Louis J Jennings, ed., *The Correspondence and Diaries of the late Right Honourable John Wilson Croker, LL D, F R S, Secretary to the Admiralty from 1809 to 1830* (3 vols., London, 1884), II, 323, Henry Holman, *English National Education A sketch of the rise of public elementary schools in England* (London, 1898), 53, *The London Times*, November 18, 1834

arrangement will put an end at once to the violent clamour which has been so loudly shouted from one end of the kingdom to the other, against the heinous offence of making our artisans and labourers learned, by elevating them, in fact, above their calling. Never was there a shallower argument broached than this, though often repeated at public meetings, in reference to this terrible effect of education, and never did power more nakedly expose its ignorance and its wickedness, than by endeavouring to disseminate such a doctrine as this. These people had better at once speak their minds boldly and candidly, and exclaim, "Do not let our slaves, and those whom we have hitherto trampled on, be delivered from their blissful ignorance. Do not let the light of knowledge shine in upon the gloom which surrounds them. Do not, in fact, let them see that we use them ignominiously, because, if you do, our power will be at an end, and we shall have men, and not brutes to deal with." There would be some manliness in this, and the question would then be merged into a mere contest between the expediency of perpetuating unjust power, and of overthrowing it, it would, in short, be a warfare between power and reason, between moral right and physical wrong.

A plan of education ought to be devised by which the community might be divided into three prominent classes, with such subdivisions as circumstances should render necessary. The first class might consist of the rich, of the possessors and inheritors of property, which, rendering them independent of personal exertion for their support, would the better enable them to execute the chief civil functions of the state, —those duties devolving upon them in preference to others, the second would be composed of those engaged in commerce and trade, the "labourers upon capital" as they have been called, with the members of the different professions, the third would comprise the larger portion of society, who are more exclusively dependent upon their labour, and are simply designated mechanics and labourers. To this class would belong the still poorer individuals, who are frequently indebted for the scanty subsistence which they obtain to the precarious hand of charity.

Consistently with what we have already said, the children of all of these classes should, to a certain age, say, seven, eight, or ten, all receive precisely the same education, with regard to food, clothing, and mental cultivation, and this equality of tuition might, perhaps, be safely continued even to a more advanced age than this, except in those instances where the children were intended for some of the more learned professions. After this a lower scale of education may be pursued, combining with the acquisition of the knowledge less directly useful, the necessary instruction and practice of the arts, upon which the future subsistence of the individual is to depend.⁸⁷

The full meaning of this pronouncement becomes evident only in the light of Buckingham's conception of the function of education.

⁸⁷ *The Parliamentary Review*, I (1833), 165.

The admission of the people into the realm of knowledge "would destroy all blind submission to the great, to the utter subversion of all domination" He explained the ignorance of the masses as the result of the bigotry of the priesthood (all priesthoods were alike in their opposition to the extension of knowledge) and of those political institutions "through which it happens that their hours are always spent in labour, which is productive, to them, of nothing further than the means of labouring on to the end of life." For him education was not an instrument of social control but of social liberation, and, if he had had his way, that future regimentation of opinion through capitalist-controlled newspapers and schools never would have been established "Do the people," he asked, "ever know the true reason for a war?" He sought an education that would give to the people the power of knowledge—the only power that is to be respected—to act for themselves in their own interests "The people are taught *this*, and taught *that*, but they are never informed how they may teach themselves to discover what is best for them"⁸⁸

These political and educational views established Buckingham's position as a "democrat" but show him in no way greatly different from the orthodox Radicals, like Hume, Grote, and Roebuck. With them he believed in the removal of the oppressive burdens of the traditional society—the unequal taxation, the Corn Laws, and the special political privileges of property—but he went beyond them to advocate legislation to ameliorate the conditions of life for the masses in the new society of industrial capitalism. In this advocacy he approached the Tory Evangelicals, Lord Ashley and Oastler, but they would have nothing to do with his political democracy and public education. In uniting a faith in the right and ability of the people to rule with a belief in the function of government to control economic activity so as to serve the needs of the people, Buckingham indicated the full meaning of his chosen designation, "Liberal Reformer."

In spite of the passage of the Factory Act, Buckingham's efforts to secure the governmental regulation of the merchant marine and the liquor traffic were the outstanding attempts between 1833 and 1837 to act on the policy of state intervention. His emphasis upon the unequal distribution of wealth and his opposition to the Poor

⁸⁸ *The Oriental Herald*, III (1824), 239, XIX (1828), 139, *The Sphynx*, October 18, 1828

Law Amendment Act indicated a close attention to the fundamental fact of life—economic misery—for the masses. This appreciation of the central problem of the new industrial society was displayed in the main proposal for dealing with the liquor problem, not prohibition but the development of institutions that would serve the cultural interests of the working class. Noteworthy as was this proposal, it was surpassed by his bold advocacy of the eight-hour day and the five-day week.⁸⁹

But the climax of his social democracy was reached when he contemplated the meaning for society of the new railroads. He appreciated the fact that they would stimulate trade, increase employment, and add to the national wealth, but beside these results he foresaw a greater effect.

The introduction of locomotive conveyance by private chartered companies, will in a short time change the whole mode of internal transit, from a system of free *competition* to a system of chartered *exclusive*. The simple point then for consideration is, shall it be a monopoly for the already overwealthy units, or a consideration for the impoverished millions?⁹⁰

Then he stated again his belief that the great problem of reform was the redistribution of wealth and asserted "that the despotism of unlimited monarchy is not so bad as the despotism of capital" "There is no concealing the fact, that in England the rich are far too rich, the poor far too poor, and that the law which tends to create and maintain this inequality must be amended." As a programme of amendment he repudiated capitalism and enounced a policy of nationalization.

We know that it will be met by the cry that it will *interfere with the enterprise of the country*. But what has the system hitherto pursued, of non-interference with what has been falsely called national enterprise, ended in? That is the question. It is full time that we should do away with a fatal thraldom to a name,—the pseudo-liberal notion that stock-jobbing enterprise, fund-speculating enterprise, capitalist enterprise, is National Enterprise. That alone is national enterprise which will cause the enormous profits that will yearly arise from this project [building of the railroads] to be universal, not associate, the property of the poor as well as of the rich, the benefit of the multitude and also the individual.⁹¹

⁸⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, XXVIII (1835), 160

⁹⁰ *The Parliamentary Review*, VI (1834), 909

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

As one reviews the stormy gusts of opinion which swept through the reformed House of Commons before 1838, one can easily see that Buckingham should have added a fourth category to his classification of members, namely, "the whirlers," and from time to time he might have listed under this head almost any of his colleagues. The inconsistency of the arguments advanced by the leading members of the House warrants such a conclusion. Of course, Buckingham was still "Lord Hum", he gyrated with a fine equilibrium, whereas his colleagues—Radicals, Whigs, and Tories—wobbled and faltered but nevertheless went round in circles. He was always "the advancer," and often "the pioneer of public opinion"—"a man ahead of his time." On the whole it can be safely asserted that few, if any, members of the first reformed House of Commons took positions and expressed ideas as consistently harmonious in the aggregate as did the independent member for Sheffield, and even more remarkable was his uniform opposition to the conservative tradition and the new orthodoxy of capitalistic Radicalism. His votes and speeches in the Commons, his addresses to his constituents, and his articles in *The Parliamentary Review* reveal a conception of social policy which contrasts sharply and not unfavourably with those supported by his more prominent colleagues. As Althorp said, Cobbett looked back to a rural society which no longer existed. Hume and the general run of liberals looked forward to a manufacturers' Eldorado. Lord Ashley and the Tory Evangelicals saw the factories and raised their eyes toward heaven. Peel and Russell did not know where to look, and Melbourne was sure that one ought to look nowhere. Buckingham envisioned a new social order—based upon organized industrialism, owned and ruled by common men who lived in cities where life was rich and varied with all that human achievement could make worth while. In later years he was to see the vision even more clearly.

In 1837 a virgin sat upon the throne, a young society stood in the land, and a new generation of prophets raised its voice. Richard Cobden preached "that masculine species of charity" which found the Ten Hour Bill an aspersion upon the parental love of labourers. Out of the parlours at last, Disraeli played the rôle of Amos and dilated upon the Rich and the Poor, "the Two Nations." And John Francis Bray felt a universal dissatisfaction and distrust menacing the land, the bosoms of the rich and the poor alike were pervaded by that uneasy sensation which is the forerunner of

revolution There was no place in the legislature of such a state for a "Liberal Reformer", harsher times demanded harder men, at least men familiar with cotton fuzz

7 THE FAILURE OF BUCKINGHAM'S CLAIMS

Buckingham's parliamentary career was a failure, even his most loyal Sheffield partisans admitted that, but the true reasons for giving up his seat were financial. The defeat of his attempt to obtain compensation for his losses in India by parliamentary action left him no alternative but resignation, which he announced just before the beginning of the 1837 session.⁹²

During the 1834 session, after the Directors had refused to consider a final offer to settle, he secured the appointment of a select committee to investigate and report upon his claims. Besides Lord John Russell, the chairman, Lord Althorp, Peel, Grant, Wynn, Hume, Torrens, Baring, Fergusson, Ashley, and twenty-eight others heard the old story.

The Company chose Thomas Love Peacock, the poet, at that time in its employ as a deputy examiner, to present its case. He argued that the Indian Government was not obligated to prove in detail the undesirability of a deported person, reviewed Buckingham's offences, and cited Indian authorities on the dangers of the free press. Most notable among his citations was the view of Sir Thomas Munro, Governor-General of Madras, who feared the outbreak of revolt in the army if the press should contrast the low pay of the native soldiers with the high salaries of their foreign officers. The deputy examiner played up the disagreement between Hastings and Adam, quoting the latter's minutes, which so sharply described the dangerous tendencies of the editor's conduct. But of those three memoranda by Hastings in answer to Adam, Peacock suppressed one entirely and used the others only to prove that even in Hastings's view the editor was the tool of malcontents. That minute which expressed the Governor-General's conviction that no injury had been done the public interest, that transmission was a punishment quite out of proportion to the editor's derelictions, and that the editor had not contumaciously attacked the Govern-

⁹² *Chapters in the Political History of Sheffield*, 16, *The Sheffield Independent*, February 18, 1837, *The Sheffield Iris*, February 14, 1837.

ment did not find place in the deputy examiner's argument. Perhaps this was only a poet's license with the facts. Peacock also contended that *The Journal* was greatly over-valued, but he figured only the investment and the sums spent for materials, nothing for those intangible assets, the copyright and good will of the public. He also protested that the Government had not forced the sale of the paper to Munston. But all this was more or less sophistry, the kernel of the Company's case was more baldly stated, "It is our business to ameliorate the conditions of India, but it is first and foremost our duty to keep it." That was "the old Tory" sentiment, which *John Bull* had spoken, and which Adam had translated into action.⁹³

Buckingham rested his case largely upon the evidence heard by the earlier committee, but he answered Peacock's chief contentions, quoting Fergusson's statement that he had never approved of the Government's treatment of *The Journal* and its editor and citing MacNaghten's sharp remarks upon the libels which had been circulated about him. He took special delight in pointing out that, after he had established *The Oriental Herald*, his Indian enemies had thought it a mistake to have sent him home. His last words to the committee were to reiterate that his yearly income from *The Journal* had been nearly eight thousand pounds.⁹⁴

Lord John Russell drew up the report, and Charles Grant, now Lord Glenelg, President of the Board of Control, gave it an editorial supervision. Of its six resolutions the first three recorded the facts, the last three embodied the committee's conclusion, unanimously agreed to.

That your Committee, without impugning the motives which actuated the measures of the Government, feel that those measures have, in their consequence, proved to Mr. Buckingham and his family, penal to a degree which could not have been contemplated at the time of their adoption.

That your Committee are therefore of opinion that Compensation ought to be made to Mr. Buckingham.

That your Committee abstain from expressing any opinion as to the Amount of Compensation, in the hope that the subject will be taken into the favourable consideration of the East India Company, and thus the interposition of Parliament, in the next session, to fix such amount, be rendered unnecessary.⁹⁵

⁹³ Report from the Select Committee on Buckingham's claims, minutes of evidence, 86-121

⁹⁴ Ibid., 122 et seq.

⁹⁵ Ibid., iii, Parliamentary Debates, XXX (1835), 1095

But in the most brusque fashion the Company refused to heed the committee's admonition to act favourably. Two months after Buckingham wrote to the Directors, calling their attention to the report, they replied, as they had been replying for a decade, that they saw no reason to alter their decision. They answered Robert Gordon, a member of the House, who inquired as to their probable action, even more sharply, "The Court of Directors feel it their duty to say that they do not propose to take any proceedings in furtherance of what they regret to perceive is the opinion expressed in the report to which you refer."⁹⁶

That such a reply could have been expected was clear from the attitude the Directors had taken toward Sir Charles Metcalfe, Acting Governor-General, who—with the co-operation of Macaulay, fresh from England, Parliament, and a panegyric on Milton—had just repealed the Adam regulations of 1823 and made the press of India as free as that of England. The Directors had passed a resolution supporting Metcalfe's appointment to the highest office in their government, but, after they learned of the new press law, they withdrew the recommendation and refused to allow the India Board even to consider him for the post. Piqued by this slight, Metcalfe resigned and left India, but not until his praises had been sung on every hand, especially at a Free Press Dinner given by the English of Calcutta, who, as a lasting monument to the "Liberator of the Indian Press," erected by the bank of the Hoogly a public library, known as "Metcalfe Hall." In commenting upon the legislative act which brought him so much praise, Metcalfe complimented public opinion as a force for good government but decried the general odium which still clung to Adam's name. This last view of Calcutta would be incomplete without a momentary glance at Buckingham's other inveterate enemy, *John Bull in the East*, he was now unrecognizable, for he appeared as *The Englishman* and was a Whig and prosperous, having become all these in 1833 when English public opinion spoke so decisively.

Buckingham's friends waited until late in the session of 1835 before attempting to bring parliamentary action on the report. When the motion for permission to bring in a bill for compensation came to a debate on August 21, John Cam Hobhouse, successor to

⁹⁶ *Parliamentary Papers*, XXXIX (1839), *Correspondence between the East India Company and Mr. Buckingham, relative to the Report of the Select Committee of 1834*, 171, 172, 173

Lord Glenelg, as President of the India Board, objected violently. He assailed Buckingham for pressing his own claims before the House and wanted to know why, after the break-up of the committee of 1826, he had waited so long to bring them forward. Hobhouse assured the Commons that "the proprietors, having no reason for dealing unjustly with the matter, had twice rejected the application." He protested against imposing a fine upon the Hindus for an affair that was none of their concern and objected most vehemently to what he described as a measure to mulct the Company of a large sum. Hume was surprised at this attitude, which, coming from the Whig spokesman for the Cabinet on Indian affairs, meant that the Melbourne Government did not intend to stand by the committee's report. Vernon Smith, Secretary of the India Board, argued that the obvious course of action was to have sued the Governor-General. O'Connell insisted that a *prima facie* case for compensation had been made out. The motion to bring in a bill was carried by a vote of 48 to 13.

The bill recapitulated the committee's findings and stipulated that the East India Company be required to pay compensation, in case of the Company's refusal, Buckingham was empowered to sue for an unnamed sum. When Hobhouse argued that a rule of the House had been violated in the way the bill was introduced, an acrimonious discussion developed. Buckingham accused him of having had a convenient lapse of memory and answered the charge that in pressing his own claims he was guilty of unethical conduct, by stating that it was no worse for him to support his right to a just settlement of the injury done him than it was for owners of West India slaves to insist that they be compensated for their slaves. The East India Company appeared at the bar of the Commons with Spankie as its advocate, he argued that the editor had originally had a remedy at law and asked, insinuating the weakness of the case, why he had dropped it. Spankie did not mention the Munston affair. John Wilks agreed with O'Connell that a clear case of robbery had been established and defended the victim as having acted with the greatest delicacy. Robinson, an East India proprietor, denied that Parliament had jurisdiction over a private matter. As a result of the controversy over the bill's introduction so late in the session, Charles Augustus Tulk, the sponsor, withdrew it with the understanding that he would bring forward a similar measure in the next session.

The Company's partisans did not resist the introduction of the bill in 1836, but they met the motion for a second reading with an amendment to postpone for six months, the usual procedure against obnoxious measures. Lawson, who moved the amendment, characterized the bill as being worthy of the American Congress. Vernon Smith, as before, insisted that Buckingham had no just claim. And Roebuck, in a burst of humanitarian sentiment, objected to increasing the tax-burden of the Hindus. But John Poulter, who had previously opposed compensation, came forward to support the bill, quoting Lord William Bentinck as having expressed regret that his administration had not been graced by such a paper as *The Calcutta Journal*. Aubrey Beauclerk undoubtedly touched the quick of the matter when he declared it was only Buckingham's lack of a "tail" (a title) which prevented him from obtaining justice. When the Company's counsel again appeared at the bar of the House, he admitted that the facts of the transfer of *The Journal* to Munston were such as to engender the suspicion that the Government had not acted with perfect propriety. The motion for a second reading was beaten, 125 nays to 81 ayes. Bentinck and O'Connell were among the ayes, Gladstone with the nays.⁹⁷

This defeat stirred Buckingham's friends to begin a public agitation in his behalf. Tulk wrote to Sheffield, pointing out that the Whigs had deserted its representative and suggesting that a contribution be opened to raise a sum for the purchase of an annuity. Tulk quoted Bentinck as having said that Buckingham's activity in India had led to a very perceptible improvement in the administration. The Sheffield leaders were quick to act on this suggestion, holding a public meeting and opening a subscription. Ibbotson, who had been chairman of Buckingham's election committee in 1833 and again in 1836, lauded his extraordinary talent and praised him for possessing "the stamina of an honest man." The fiery Ebenezer Elliott was more vehement.

I seldom lay wagers, but I will bet any man here as large a wager as I ever laid, namely, a pint of ale, that there was not in the House,

⁹⁷ *The Journals of the House of Commons*, XC (1835), 515, 541, XCI (1836), 15, 34, *Parliamentary Papers*, II (1835), 331. A Bill to enable James Silk Buckingham, late of Calcutta, in the East Indies, to recover Compensation from the East India Company, for Loss and Damages sustained by him by the suppression of the Calcutta Journal, of which he was proprietor, *Parliamentary Debates*, XXX (1835), 826 *et seq.*, 1096 *et seq.*, XXXI (1836), 758-761, *India Office Records, Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol 536, 571, 615

one bread-tax eater, one man flogger, one white-slave holder, or one black-slave holder, either who did not vote against Mr Buckingham

Oh that it depended on the navy to decide whether Mr Buckingham should have an independent trust in the evening of his troubled day ⁸⁸

Elliott insisted that the real reason for the defeat of Buckingham's claims was the hostility of the aristocrats, who disliked the exposure of their evil-doings in the colonies. He called upon the commercial people of the kingdom to raise a competence for "a man who has done more for free trade than any other man now living" and invoked his own integrity in support of the plea, proclaiming, "Fellow countrymen, I am he who never yet told you a falsehood." The agitation spread throughout the industrial and commercial towns of the kingdom, and by June ninety-five petitions praying that justice be done had reached the Commons. At the same time the national subscription grew, but somewhat slowly ⁸⁹

Backed by this demonstration of public sentiment, Tulk on June 7, 1836, again brought the claims before the House, offering a motion, which would have placed it on record in support of the Committee and the payment of ten thousands pounds compensation. Hobhouse and Smith again displayed their irritation, the one decrying Buckingham's presence during the debate, the other insisting that Tulk owed the House an apology for wasting its time. But "the old Tory" valedictory was delivered by James Hogg, who had been a Company functionary in India when *The Journal* was most active. Hogg left no detail of the Company's complaints against Buckingham unrecounted, he had published anonymous letters, he had set himself up as a supreme arbiter of policies, he had insulted the constituted authorities, including the Lord Bishop, and he was destroying the efficiency and subordination of the civil and military service. Hastings's reply to the Madras address was "a little flourish about the liberty of the press," and Adam was "the proudest ornament of the distinguished service to which he belongs." The Indian Government had not done anything directly or indirectly to injure Mr. Buckingham or his paper. Tulk's final word was to deplore the meaningful absence of Lord John Russell, the Whig leader of the

⁸⁸ *The Sheffield Iris*, March 1, 1836

⁸⁹ *The Journals of the House of Commons*, XCI (1836), general index; *The Sheffield Iris*, March 22, April 26, 1836

House, who, although for years a supporter of Buckingham, now in the final crisis, when he had power to render the supreme service, deserted him.¹⁰⁰

Immediately after this vote Buckingham's London friends held a public meeting and joined in the movement to raise a subscription. Lord William Bentinck presided and testified to the existence of a sentiment in Calcutta that Buckingham had been very unjustly treated. Hume, O'Connell, Sir Charles Forbes, and several other members of Parliament bore witness to their belief in the justice of Buckingham's claims and the purity of his character. Forbes lauded him for refusing to take refuge from his creditors in the bankruptcy law. In explaining the adverse votes, Poulter asserted that many members of the House were afraid to risk the wrath of the Company, "The poor man could not stand up and contend successfully with the wealthy man." Other factors which contributed to the outcome were the independent parliamentary course pursued by Buckingham, who had often voted in favour of reforms opposed by the Whigs, and the general strained relations which existed between the Company and the Whigs at the time the issue was before the Commons. Perhaps also the close personal friendship between Hobhouse and William John Bankes, Jr., caused the former to find more than a political reason for opposing the claim. But jesting fate broke in even upon this hour of Buckingham's consolation. At the close of O'Connell's speech a youth arose and, crying out that his name was Master Henry O'Connell, exclaimed, "You talk of justice, why don't you do me justice? I am your son, do me justice." Pandemonium broke loose at this, the Irish leader ran out a side door, and the meeting ended in confusion. There was truth in *The Iris*'s comment upon Buckingham's career, "Fortune, ever fickle, seems to have made him the butt for her most sportive mood."

The result of the subscription throughout the kingdom was to raise a sum of £2,657, sufficient to purchase an annuity of £100 for Buckingham and one of £80 for his wife. Leading contributors were the Duke of Devonshire, Lord William Bentinck, Daniel O'Connell, Sir Charles Forbes, Joseph Hume, Ibbotson Bros., Vickers & Sons, Southwood Smith, Edward Baines, and John Gully, the ex-prize fighter. Lesser sums, down to ten shilling instalments, came from all sorts of persons—an East India officer, a teetotal

¹⁰⁰ *Parliamentary Debates*, XXXIV (1836), 170-201

operative, a female and a lover of justice, and a female admirer of patriotism¹⁰¹

Buckingham's disappointment and resentment expressed themselves in criticisms of the Whigs, especially Lord John Russell. He felt that the Tories in their consistent opposition, had been more honest than the Whigs, who had deserted him at the last and vital moment. When he expressed this view in a speech at Southampton, Lord John Russell wrote to ask if Buckingham accused him of treachery. Buckingham retorted that truth demanded him to give an explanation, and if the truth hurt that was too bad. He followed up this letter with another, denying that he questioned Russell's private character but assailing his political conduct. When Russell answered that he was willing to defend his public acts, Buckingham replied sharply, after declaring that he did not wish to fight a duel, he extended his felicitations to the Whig parliamentarian "I wish your Lordship to live for many years, that you may have an opportunity of retracing your steps and retrieving your errors in much more important questions than my individual wrongs" The Tory *John Bull* found this exchange "uncommonly amusing"¹⁰²

In July, 1837, Buckingham journeyed to Sheffield for a last visit to his constituents, and they received him with the usual acclaim. He was "the rich man's pattern" and "the poor man's advocate," "the friend of every lover of his country and his kind", he was not like those men who merely talked about liberty—he conceived plans and then was up and doing. At a public dinner, which crowded the local theatre, he made a farewell speech, urging the extension of the suffrage, pleading for the right of a minority to be heard, denying that any man or party had a monopoly of patriotism, and refusing to pass judgment upon the candidates for the seat he was vacating. *The Independent* admitted that he could be re-elected, *The Iris*, having in mind his prospective journey to America, where he had attracted the attention of the leading temperance reformers, wished him well, "May he find a home in every land he visits"¹⁰³

Later in the year with cold bitterness in his heart but with

¹⁰¹ Report of a Public Meeting held at Free Masons Hall to Raise a Fund for the Purchase of an Annuity for James Silk Buckingham, *The London Times*, June 16, 1836, *The Sheffield Iris*, June 21, 1836, *Parliamentary Debates*, XXIX (1835), 30 et seq., Alfred Gatty, *op. cit.*, 258

¹⁰² *John Bull*, September 19, 1836. Buckingham-Russell correspondence

¹⁰³ *The Sheffield Iris*, July 18, 25, 1837, *The Sheffield Independent*, July 22, 1837, John Marsh, *Temperance Recollections* (New York, 1866), 51

grand projects in his mind, he sailed down the English Channel bound for New York, and between South Foreland and Beachy Head sentiment and resentment united in lines, "To my native land and the friends left behind"

While from the tall mast the blue signal's still waving,
And the breeze fills the sails that the moon saw unfurl'd,
A pang—half-indignant—swells my bosom while leaving
Thy shores—once so famed as the Hope of the World,
For though to the slave thou canst Liberty give,
And mediate Justice when Nations demand,
Thine own Children, when plunder'd, oppress'd, deceived,
Find not Justice, nor Mercy, nor Truth at thy hand ¹⁰⁴

The sentiment was as true of millions as it was of him.

¹⁰⁴ *Parliamentary Report on Mr Buckingham's Claims to Compensation from the East India Company Submitted to the Calm and Impartial Consideration of the Friends of Justice* (London, 1836), inserted after page 16

CHAPTER VI

BEFORE VOLSTEAD

I To AMERICA

THE voyage to America was not an entirely new venture, nor was it to be a short excursion along the Atlantic seaboard. In 1829 Buckingham had attracted considerable attention both in England and in France by proposing to sail round the world on a mission of "Temperance, Education, Benevolence, and Peace." At the masthead of his ship, the *Olive Branch*, was to fly the Union Jack, but surmounting it there was to be an ensign bearing the legend, "On Earth, peace,—Good will toward men." Under the captain's benevolent command, European scientists and linguists were to visit the countries beyond Bengal, giving to them the industrial products and scientific knowledge of the West in exchange for opportunities to study their customs, to explore their territories, and to establish the bases of permanent intercourse with them. The return of this shipload of knowledge was to be by the way of Cape Horn and the Atlantic seaports of South and North America.

Just before the Revolution of 1830 Buckingham was in Paris lecturing. His discourses were greeted with the usual enthusiasm, and the proposed voyage, after an investigation by the Geographical Society of France, was given hearty approval. Count de la Borda formed the Society of Civilization to promote the enterprise, and Laffitte, Lafayette, the Queen, and the King gave money to the fund for its support. Such worthies as the Dukes of Bedford, Devon, Portland, Leinster, Sussex, and Somerset, beside less notable figures like Lord Durham, Lord John Russell, and even John Cam Hobhouse, made contributions to the English subscription. But the captain's plans missed fire. The Admiralty refused to lend a dismantled warship to be outfitted as the *Olive Branch*. Certain disturbances in Paris overthrew the Bourbons. Certain other occurrences in London and the Midlands toppled the Tories out of office. And these untoward events sent the promoter of the *grand voyage* on a shorter but no less exciting journey—the ride about Paradise Square and up to the hustings in Haymarket Street.¹

¹ M. Dumont-d'Urville, *Rapport sur le Projet de Voyage présenté à la société de géographie par M. Buckingham*. *Lu à la séance de la commission centrale du 5 novembre 1830*, *The Sheffield Iris*, July 27, 1830.

In 1837 Buckingham talked of reversing the proposed route of the *Olve Branch*. After visiting the United States he intended to go to Texas and Mexico, then to cross the Pacific to China, and, perhaps after five years, return to England by way of Central Asia, Siberia, and Russia. But he had more practical designs also. Before leaving England he had written to Edward C. Delavan, Secretary of the American Temperance Union, expressing the fear that, with so many banks failing in America, there would be neither the means nor the interest to bring the people to his lectures. And he would be accompanied by his wife and youngest child, Leicester Silk, a boy prodigy, who were hardly fitting companions for a world tour which was to include the transit of Texas, Mexico, China, and Siberia.

The Buckinghams made the Atlantic crossing on the packet boat *President*. Rough weather held back the ship, and they were at sea forty-three days, landing in New York October 19, 1837. Henry Wikoff, an American adventurer, returned on the same boat. He considered all his fellow passengers commonplace except "the distinguished Oriental traveller," who told the yarn about how once on the outskirts of Bombay a tiger had rolled over and over the palanquin in which he was riding. The American auditor, like later American audiences, was impressed by the mild and genial manner of the *raconieur*, whose clear blue eyes betokened "the restless spirit, yet humane intention" which sent him over the world as an apostle of "Temperance, Education, Benevolence, and Peace" and in quest of whatever coin was current in the lands he chose to visit.²

Buckingham saluted the American people with a printed "Address" in which he told of his wanderings in the Levant, his losses in India, and his labours in Parliament, he also affirmed his love of liberty, mentioned the proposed journey round the world, and called upon the Americans to notice the one among many strangers to their land who came bearing fresh knowledge of the classical and scriptural countries. Before a month had passed he was lecturing in Clinton Hall, and *The Knickerbocker Magazine*, which was publishing his "Oriental Sketches," recorded that he seemed "to have taken that 'many headed beast, the town' completely by the horns."³

² Henry Wikoff, *Reminiscences of an Idler* (New York, 1880), 444.

³ Mr. Buckingham's Address to the People of the United States, New York, October 25, 1837, *The Knickerbocker Magazine*, XI (1837), 80. Edgar Allan Poe introduced him into a story, "Some Words with a Mummy," which appeared in the April number of *The Whig Review* for 1845.

2 LECTURE TOURS

During the late 1830's lectures were a common form of entertainment, but, then as now, America did not lack for amusements, and Buckingham found need for all his skill as a speaker to win audiences. When he began his New York discourses on the scriptural countries his chief competitor was an industrial fair with such new wonders as a steam engine driving a shingle-cutting saw, a brick-moulding machine, and a corn-sheller. Ladies were invited to inspect "rubbers," which were better for their feet than satins, and gentlemen were offered the comforts of an improved rocking-chair, which was described as "the lazy man's delight." Rope-ladders, fire escapes, and rubber life-preservers reminded one that living in hotels and navigating inland rivers were not without dangers, as Buckingham was to find out more than once before the end of his tour. Manhattan offered also the spectacles of a brick-laying contest and an exhibition of fireworks at the American Museum. Across the river in the pleasant village of Hoboken a ploughing contest was in progress. Brooklyn, however, was quiet, only the excitement occasioned by the opening of the Long Island railroad broke its customary lethargy. But James Silk was equal to the occasion, and before leaving the city he had repeated his discourses in six different places, moving from Clinton Hall to Stuyvesant Institute, and from there to the University Chapel on Washington Square as the audiences increased in size and brilliance. Before he left the country—three years later—he had returned to the city five times and had given ten courses of lectures before its audiences.⁴

In other parts of the country he found rival attractions of more common varieties. Baltimore could see cock-fights for fifty cents—the price of hearing "the distinguished Oriental traveller"—or attend a circus, which boasted of possessing some "all-fired big oxen." Charleston papers advertised a display of fireworks at the Diorama—"The Conflagration of Moscow"—and assured the public that the exhibition was not dangerous. The inhabitants of Savannah were urged to see a giraffe, for, as the papers said, such an animal might never come to town again. Throughout the South Buckingham

⁴ J. S. Buckingham, *America, Descriptive, Historical, and Statistic, including a Journey through the Northern or Free States* (3 vols., London, 1841), I, 17; *The New York Daily Express*, October 19, 21, and 26, 1837.

ham followed the route of a Miss Davenport from the Drury Lane Theatre in London, she and her parents presented scenes from Shakespeare In New Orleans "Mad'le Celeste" was to be seen in "The Moorish Page or The Page of Chivalry" and in "the dramy," "The Wizard Skiff or the Pirates of the Isle" New Orleans and other towns of the Mississippi and Ohio valley also found excitement in such local attractions as horse races, lotteries, and pious frauds supported by the churches as the means of raising funds for charity Pittsburgh thrilled to the wonders of optical illusions ⁵

On the Cumberland Road Buckingham met a travelling show which advertised itself as "a wonderful exhibition of magic, mechanical, chemical, thaumaturgical, and vocal illusions, as performed by the ancient sorcerers and Indian Brahmins" and boasted of having been exhibited before the court of Ispahan, before his mightiness, Mohammed Shah, and before the court of England The performance began with the singing of "the invocation to Psontompanech" and "the chant of the Sacred Plume," progressed through various tricks of "the black art," in which a lady's glove was changed into a rabbit, and wound up with the soul-thrilling spectacle of "the dead-shot magu" discharging a revolver at a man who caught the balls in his mouth Handbills assured the public that no religious person would feel the least repugnance at any word or act of the entertainment Buckingham observed that the usual spectators at the show were "the old Americans" (the Irish were too poor and the Germans too parsimonious to attend) and remarked, a little sorrowfully, that America was a young country and, like a child, preferred the magician and juggler to the graver teacher

During the early months of 1838 Buckingham was in Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, returning to New York late in May. In June he ascended the Hudson and worked westward to Buffalo After being awed by Niagara Falls, he reversed his course until he reached Lake Champlain, which he crossed into New England He arrived in Boston in September In the closing weeks of the year, before returning to New York, he visited Providence and Plymouth

From time to time the English traveller crossed the paths of other

⁵ *The Savannah Georgian*, February 15, 1839, *The Louisiana Courier* (New Orleans), March 30, 1839, J S Buckingham, *The Eastern and Western States of America, from Maine to the Rivers of Mississippi and Missouri* (3 vols, London, 1842), III, 9

lecturers When he began speaking in New York, George Catlin, the famous authority on the Indians, was holding forth on Black Hawk, the latest menace on the western frontier And a Mr Simons, fresh from instructing Harvard men in the art of elocution, was seeking auditors According to newspaper notices he imparted to poetry a glowing fervour which only a few could imagine without having heard him In Baltimore Buckingham met a rival who discussed the intriguing subjects, "phrenology" and "love" Advertisements urged the ladies to attend the lecture on "love," which the speaker dealt with under four heads—"love, the instinct, domestic love, social love, and romantic or sentimental love" At Saratoga Springs, the northern centre of fashion, where Buckingham enjoyed the amenities for ten days, a Mr Irving from South Carolina regaled audiences which applauded him to the "echo" with effusions announced under the titles, "Passages from the Diary of a Physician" and "Little Cock Robin" The first discourse—called by its author "pensero" —was succulent with bits that recounted the affair of a doctor's assistant with the daughter of a patient The fastidious Englishman thought these details lascivious and noted that several elderly ladies left the hall before the speaker had finished The second discourse—"allegro"—dealt with the "cock robins and sparrows" of society, those gallants who made life sweet to females of all ages Boston—"the Athens of America"—was *par excellence* the haven of professional talkers Harriet Martineau, commenting on the New England love of "culture," remarked, "Oh, call it lectures on Music, with illustrations, and everybody will come" Buckingham was impressed by the number of halls in the city large enough for public meetings At the time of his arrival George Combe, a Scotsman, was instructing small assemblies in phrenology, the current intellectual fad "The distinguished Oriental traveller" spoke in the Odeon under the auspices of the Mercantile Library Association Combe refused to believe that his audiences attained the number of eight hundred persons ⁶

The last week of January 1839 saw the traveller landing at Charleston for a tour of the South The Carolina city received him with open arms—a surprise because he had feared that his well-

⁶ *The New York Daily Express*, October 25, 1837, *The Baltimore Sun*, April 21, 1838, *America, Historical, Descriptive, and Statistic*, II, 445. George Combe, *Notes on the United States of North America during a Phrenological Visit in 1838, 1839, and 1840* (3 vols, Edinburgh, 1841), I, 165

known anti-slavery sentiments would make him unwelcome But he discovered that the favour he had won as a free trade advocate more than balanced the antagonism aroused by his slavery heresy Before departing for Savannah he was induced to repeat his lectures From the Georgia seaport he moved inland to Augusta, Alexandria, Macon, and Montgomery, where he turned south to Mobile He arrived in New Orleans late in March but was too sick to begin lecturing at once He had originally planned an ascent of the Mississippi by steamboat, but at Nachez, where he learned that Vicksburg had been destroyed by a tornado, he left the river and turned eastward, journeying leisurely across Alabama, Georgia, and the Carolinas He penetrated the Blue Ridge country of the Old Dominion and reached the sea coast by way of Richmond and Norfolk, where so many years before he had spent a lone-some winter

Buckingham filled out 1838 with a second tour of New England This time he went to Maine and worked toward New York, visiting Bangor, Augusta, Portsmouth, Salem, Boston, Springfield, Hartford, and New Haven He found the society of the Yale faculty much more elevating than that of less intellectual Americans

Competitors did not daunt James Silk, his reputation as a popular lecturer was well founded, and his American exertions did not go without praise Almost a year and a half before his arrival *The New York Evening Star* had discovered him as a hero of romance and one of the most fluent and eloquent speakers of England And he did not disappoint this advance notice. *The New York Daily Express* described his first lecture as "almost all that talent, eloquence, and good taste could make it" In a later item the same paper observed, "Better than almost any man we have ever heard, he has the power to carry those whom he addresses with him in his travels" *The Washington Daily Intelligencer*, after recording the presence in his audience of such persons as John Quincy Adams, Henry Clay, Felix Grundy, and the British ambassador, applauded his graphic powers *The Baltimore Sun* remarked upon his "peculiar enthusiasm" *The Philadelphia Public Ledger* described his manner as "modest and unpretending" and his style as "simple and clear," lacking "parade" but pursuing the argument with "logical precision" *The Pittsburg Mercury* thought his digressions "well-timed" and his illustration "appropriate" and affirmed that his lectures were highly gratifying to large and intelligent audiences *The Cincinnati*



JAMES SILK BUCKINGHAM IN LATER LIFE
From his *Autobiography* (1855)

Chronicle reported similar facts and opinions, one of its correspondents complimented the lecturer's "chaste language"⁷

But the South bestowed upon him the warmest appreciation His mien, his manner, and his subject were quite to the taste of southern refinement Light grey hair crowned a full forehead and gave to his regular features a grave but lively intellectual aspect He was vigorous and well-poised He was "about the best-looking man one might expect to meet within ten thousand", his complexion was "one that Rubens would have liked to paint", indeed—there could be no more extravagant praise—"Queen Elizabeth would have been satisfied with his appearance" His manner was worthy of his appearance His voice was sweet and melodious, his gestures were easy and graceful, his *bonhomie* was that which could be acquired only by intercourse with the most polished nations He was in every respect "the gentleman" And the subject of his discourses appealed to southern piety "*The Pyramids!* *The Pyramids!* Mr Buckingham will lecture, to-night, on the Pyramids of Egypt! Such a theme, and such a lecturer, speaking from the evidences of the senses, cannot fail to attract the expectant throng" thus *The Charleston Courier* announced the repetition of his lectures In a previous notice the same paper described his effusions as being of "a high order of rational, moral, and religious instruction" One is not surprised, therefore, to learn that "all the microcosm of Charleston"—"youth and age, manhood's pride and womanhood's loveliness, the sober student and the sprig of fashion, the blue-stocking and the belle, pastor and people, lawyer and client, doctor and patient"—turned out to see and hear the handsome paragon of excellence⁸

Savannah paid similar homage to the "interesting and delightful lecturer," whom "the beauty, fashion, and respectability of the city thronged to hear" And New Orleans, learning of these successes, awaited his coming with anticipations of a rare intellectual treat

⁷ *The New York Evening Star*, June 27, 1836, *The New York Daily Express*, October 31 and November 17, 1837, *The Washington Daily Intelligencer*, March 23, 1838, *The Baltimore Sun*, March 29, 1838, *The Philadelphia Public Ledger*, April 25, 1838, *The Pittsburg Mercury*, April 8, 1840, *The Cincinnati Chronicle*, May 16, 1840

⁸ Spencer T Hall, *Biographical Sketches of Remarkable People, chiefly from personal recollections* (London, 1873), 204, James Grant, *Random Recollections of the House of Commons* (London, 1835), 338, Dawson Burns, *Temperance History, a consecutive Narrative of the Rise, Development, and Extension of the Temperance Reform* (2 vols., London, 1889), I, 77, *The Sheffield Iris*, December 9, 1834, *The Charleston Courier*, January 23 and 31, 1839

Everywhere Buckingham's graphic powers, which had been noted so many times by his English auditors, received unstinted praise. There can be no doubt that these powers were very great. On one occasion an artist, who listened to the description of the approach to Damascus, was so inspired that, after dreaming of the scene, he was moved to paint it, and the accuracy of the delineation was so great that the lecturer himself was surprised.⁹

The American lectures consisted of two courses of six appearances each, the first on Egypt and the second on Palestine. In describing Egypt he began with the approach to Alexandria, then took his hearers up the Nile, through the baths of Cairo, underground into the catacombs, and finally to an ascent of a pyramid. The description of Palestine was even more interesting. He landed his auditors at Tyre and carried them step by step to Jerusalem. To give an added effect to the final lecture, he wore the costume of an Arabian sheik—white robe, crimson cloak and turban, and a purple sash. *The Savannah Georgian* left no doubt of its appreciation of the descriptions of the Holy Land, exclaiming “We imagined that we were treading on ‘holy ground’”¹⁰ What the effect of such discourses were, *The Charleston Courier* described

He has made the Bible a living book, and its dead language alive. We are satisfied that the christian portion of the community will ever remember their obligations to him. He has removed many doubts, he has given them a livelier perception of many truths, he has fortified their faith. For the multitudes, who are entirely neglectful of the holy volume he has done more—he has literally disinhumed the sacred Book.¹¹

An admirer who published notes of the lectures declared that he could no more give in print even the tithe of the interest contained

⁹ *The Southern Patriot* (Savannah, Ga.), January 29, 1839, *The Parliamentary Review*, IV (1833), 183

¹⁰ *The Savannah Georgian*, February 13, 1839. “From Mount Lebanon we gazed with ecstatic feelings on the lovely valley of the Jordan and the train of pleasurable emotions which crowded upon our senses was only dispelled, that we might be summoned from the scene to linger at the foot of Hermon, clothed with refreshing dews, and observe the king of the forest and other animals of the brute creation to quaff the light waters of Tiberias, while myriads of water fowl hovered over its surface, and preyed on its funny tenants. Contrasted with this lake of life was the sea of death, with waters so sluggish and so offensive, that even the brute instinctively avoided thereof, while its dull and leaden surface refused to be rippled by the winds, and fish and reptile loathed its embrace.”

¹¹ *The Charleston Courier*, February 8, 1839

in the delivery of them than he could convey to a blind man a correct idea of "the orb of day"¹²

But the lecturer found some critics and a few enemies In New York, when he refused to pay ten dollars for advertising space which other papers sold for two dollars, he drew the fire of James Gordon Bennett's *Herald* It rattled the bones of the Bankes controversy in a ghostly dance of abuse A Boston missionary, after reading accounts of the lectures in the New York papers, wrote protests against what he called "the inaccuracies" of the speaker In Philadelphia "G B C" declared that the newspapers "puffed" Buckingham in order to sell their sheets and expressed an antagonism to his carrying off several thousand dollars *The Public Ledger* defended him against the charge of being an "impostor" *The Baltimore Sun* thought he made himself "ridiculous" by appearing in an Oriental costume made in New York In the South only *The Mobile Commercial Register* broke the pæan of praise by observing that the lecturer's tongue was hung in his head for a skilful adaptation to rapid use "Anti-Humbug" of Pittsburgh was incensed at "this Lion of the East" who took five or six hundred dollars out of the town In Cincinnati "the Lion's" remarks on the size of the pyramids provoked a sharp controversy But, as in England, Buckingham's friends defended him against his detractors In Bangor, Maine, professors, judges, lawyers, and doctors signed a document recording their faith in him, and a New York public meeting vindicated him against the abuse of *The Herald*¹³

After the southern triumph and the second tour of New England, James Silk turned his eyes toward the single section where his voice had not yet been heard, and late in January, 1840, he left New York for the West He planned to cross Pennsylvania from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, but impassable roads forced him to turn south at Harrisburg At Baltimore he took a coach over the National Pike for Brownsville, where he boarded a steamer and descended the

¹² James Hildreth, *Notes of the Buckingham Lectures embracing the sketches of the geography, antiquities, and present conditions of Egypt and Palestine, compiled from the oral discourses of the Honourable J S Buckingham* Together with a sketch of his life (New York, 1838), 3

¹³ J S Buckingham, *An Address to the British Public on the Slanderous Articles of Certain Writers in "Punch" against the British and Foreign Institute and its Resident Director* (London, n d), 6, *Eastern and Western States*, I, 446, *The Philadelphia Public Ledger*, May 3, 1838, *The Baltimore Sun*, April 26, 1838, *The Mobile Commercial Register*, March 20, 1840, *The Daily Pittsburgher*, April 10 and 11, 1840, *The Cincinnati Chronicle*, May 27, 1840

Monongahela River to Pittsburgh. He remained in "the Sheffield of America" for two weeks Excursions to the Rappite community at Economy, Pennsylvania, and to several Ohio towns carried him to Plymouth on the Ohio River, where he again boarded a steamer He stopped to speak in Cincinnati, "the Queen of the Western Waters," and in Louisville, which he found even less intellectual in its tastes than Pittsburgh He arrived in St Louis early in June, but he did not choose to go further west Instead, he started up the Mississippi toward the Falls of St Anthony, a voyage which he was forced to give up when low water in the upper Mississippi made navigation difficult After returning to St Louis he directed his course toward Chicago, going part of the way by steamer and the remainder by coach across the open prairie At the Illinois lake port he embarked upon a voyage around the Great Lakes, touching at Milwaukee and stopping for a week at Detroit, before he landed at Cleveland He then travelled by stage to Buffalo, where he crossed into Canada.

3. THE TEMPERANCE AGITATION

Although Buckingham's tours were money-making ventures, he took every opportunity to place his talents at the service of humanitarian reforms The Atlantic seaboard and Gulf cities heard him advocate the establishment of sailors' homes The New York merchants and shipowners were cold to such benevolence—its supporters were chiefly ladies—but those of Charleston, Savannah, and New Orleans responded to his plea with some enthusiasm At the latter port the collector of the customs declared that his name would be honoured by posterity because of his efforts to improve the lot of seamen *The Boston Recorder* also applauded his work but disapproved of holding a meeting for such a cause on Sunday In New York and Boston he spoke in favour of international peace, advocating the creation of "a congress of nations" and foreseeing, as the result of the development of steam navigation, a new era of international intercourse and understanding The diffusion of such ideas was deplored by many American patriots, who said that the peace societies were composed of old women, abolitionist negroes, lame deacons, superannuated clergymen, one-eyed sextons, and cashiered corporals who desired "to learn war no more." New York also listened to his arguments in favour of a system of public education,

a cause then being agitated by the young journalist, Horace Greeley, and the rising politician, William H Seward In Philadelphia his remarks on Levantine baths stirred up some interest in favour of establishing wash-houses for the poor *The Public Ledger*, after noting that only the rich were accustomed to bathing, expressed the opinion that Stephen Gerard's money would have bestowed greater benefits upon the city, if, instead of having been devoted to education, it had been spent in erecting baths for the people Buckingham's sentiments against duelling also attracted attention Edward C Delavan transmitted them to a New York paper, and their dissemination contributed something to the growth of that opinion which in 1838 brought Congress to prohibit the practice in the District of Columbia¹⁴

But Buckingham's primary interest was in the temperance movement He had originally attracted the attention of the American temperance leaders by an effort to secure the duty-free admission into England of several million American anti-liquor tracts The Chancellor of the Exchequer agreed to allow their admission, but subordinate treasury officials held them up After this favourable notice he received visits from the American temperance workers who came to London, at the same time he began a correspondence with Edward C Delavan, who, as the President of the New York State Temperance Society and the promoter of the American Temperance Union, was one of the most influential of the American anti-liquor leaders As a result of these contacts and the reports by the American temperance journals of his parliamentary activities, Buckingham's reputation as an apostle of teetotalism was well known in the United States¹⁵

On November 13, 1837, shortly after the opening of his course of lectures, he spoke before the first meeting of the newly organized New York City Temperance Society A large assembly gathered in the "Tabernacle" and enjoyed what *The Journal of the American Temperance Union* called "a splendid performance" Buckingham

¹⁴ *The New York Daily Express*, November 16, 1837, *The New York American*, March 6, 1838, *The Philadelphia Public Ledger*, May 7, 1838, *The Boston Recorder*, October 2, 1838, *The Charleston Courier*, February 8, 1839, *The Louisiana Courier* (New Orleans), April 19, 1839, *America, Historical, Descriptive, and Statistical*, I, 20 *et seq*

¹⁵ John Marsh, *Temperance Recollections* (New York, 1866), 51, *Journal of the American Temperance Union*, I (1837), 125, *Temperance Recorder* (Albany, New York), IV (1835), 46, 51, 65, 75, *The Temperance Almanac* (1837), 20.

contrasted the sobriety of Mohammedan countries with the drunkenness of Christian nations, particularly Ireland, Scotland, and England, which he ranked in that order as being most drunken He called abstinence from ardent spirits good, but total abstinence from wine and beer was better Late in December of the same year he addressed the Young Men's Total Abstinence Society Twenty ministers, mostly Methodist, sat on the platform with him He related that his example as a teetotaller, both on board the *President* and in his New York boarding-house, had had good effects, notably in the latter where wines had been removed from the table and the ladies, following his wife's example, had given up drinking But he assured the young men that he was "too much of a gentleman" to censure any one who drank, he wished only to point out to the toper the evil results of indulgence¹⁸

His journey to Washington, which was broken by stops at Philadelphia and Baltimore, was made under the auspices of the American Temperance Union He was accompanied by Delavan, the national secretary, and the Reverend John March, the head of the New York office The Philadelphia temperance forces prepared a welcome for the distinguished advocate of their cause A "Temperance Festival" was held in an Arch Street theatre, where some fifteen hundred people crowded inside, and a thousand more, who could not find room, milled around in the street Fathers and sons were accompanied by their wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, and sweethearts Brilliantly dressed ladies made up almost half the audience Tables were loaded with fruits and confections, and ice cream was served in abundance Buckingham spoke for two hours, and the newspapers recorded that his easy delivery, beautiful phrases, and sparkling wit charmed his auditors. He condemned wine-bibbing by the rich, especially by the ladies, and argued that total abstinence was the best, if not the only, solution of the liquor problem Before closing his address he pledged his son, Leicester Silk—as Hannibal had been sworn to fight Rome—to make eternal warfare upon alcohol and read a poem which the boy had written for the occasion

Then Hail! Bright Temperance, heavenly queen,
On us thy blessings pour,
On thee shall tott'ring drunkards lean
And vow to drink no more

¹⁸ *America, Historical, Descriptive, and Statistic*, I, 18, 22, *Journal of the American Temperance Union*, I (1837), 176, 187, II (1838), 9.

Delavan, Mathew Carey, and Christian Keener eulogized the guest and his work, and the audience passed resolutions of welcome and commendation

The Philadelphia National Gazette described the celebration as "very brilliant" In praising the speaker's oratory, *The Pennsylvanian* remarked, "With such advocates the cause he has espoused cannot fail in making rapid progress" *The Presbyterian* also commended the speaker but did not approve the introduction of the English custom of feasting at public gatherings¹⁷

Baltimore heard "the celebrated lecturer" from the pulpit of the Eutaw Methodist Church, Washington from the Speaker's chair of the House of Representatives Since the early 'thirties the English and American temperance societies had joined in celebrating one day each year as "international temperance day," and Buckingham had come to Washington for the 1838 celebration, March 27 John Marsh recorded that he spoke for an hour and a half to the great edification of a distinguished audience Most of his auditors were the members of the Congressional Temperance Society¹⁸

In the course of his subsequent travels James Silk spoke many times for "the cause" At Charleston he addressed a large gathering, which raised funds to establish a new temperance journal, in New Haven over twenty-five hundred people turned out to hear his plea New England was just then at the crest of its first anti-liquor agitation Without a doubt the most interesting American audience before which he urged teetotalism was "a temperance camp-meeting," near Lexington, Kentucky The townspeople and country folk for miles around gathered in a grove, the neighbourhood preachers left their pulpits, and the united choirs of several churches sang for the occasion In Canada he addressed a notable assembly in the Parliament House, then at Quebec, the speech was so moving that at least one gentleman went home and destroyed the contents of a well-stocked wine and spirit cellar

The years of Buckingham's sojourn in the United States witnessed several significant developments in the American temperance movement After much preliminary work the anti-liquor forces had

¹⁷ *Journal of American Temperance Union*, II (1838), 33 *et seq* , *The United States Gazette*, February 23, 1838, *The Philadelphia National Gazette*, February 24, 1838, *The Pennsylvania Herald*, February 24, 1838, *The Pennsylvanian*, February 24, 1838, *The Presbyterian*, March 3, 1838

¹⁸ *Journal of the American Temperance Union*, II (1838), 36, John Marsh, *op. cit.*, 53

achieved an effective national organization in the American Temperance Union, which, under the active direction of its secretary, Delavan, was doing much to integrate the activities of the local and state temperance societies. But the formative period in the evolution of temperance convictions was not yet closed, and there was much contention in the ranks of the crusaders. On the one hand they were not united in favour of total abstinence, which the American Temperance Union advocated, the very modern issue of "whisky *vs* light wines and beers" was quite alive. On the other hand they disagreed decidedly as to the relative efficacy of moral persuasion and legislative enactments as the better means of combatting drunkenness. The year 1838 brought the first legislation restricting the sale of liquors. The laws were based upon the interesting principle of limiting the retail sales of spirits to large quantities, with the obvious intention of destroying the dram and grog shops where whisky was sold by the glass. Tennessee adopted a gallon law, Connecticut a five-gallon law, Rhode Island a ten-gallon law, and Massachusetts, not to be outdone in virtue, passed a fifteen-gallon law. The inevitable reaction to this legislation was its violation, and again Massachusetts took the lead. In Boston the rum dealers defied the law, and a mob attacked a grocer who had complained against a competitor for continuing to sell "small drinks." Moreover, Yankee ingenuity found a new field of endeavour. Some one set up a tent to show "a wonderful striped pig," and the cost of a drink of rum was charged as the price of admission, when the curious sightseer went in he found the pig and beside its pen a table on which was a glass of rum. What the spectator did with the rum was his own business. In later years the pig lost its stripes and became "blind," probably so that it could not see what was going on.¹⁹

Although the pig lost his eyesight, the vision of the anti-liquor advocates became keener and saw more and more vividly the evils which intemperance wrought. Indeed, the evolution of "prohibition" cannot be understood except against the background of what the temperance advocates saw, or thought they saw, about them.

The prevalence of drunkenness in early nineteenth-century America is a well-attested fact, as in England, every trade, occupation, and profession, as well as every social occasion, had its own

¹⁹ J. A. Krout, *The Origins of Prohibition* (New York, 1925), 156, 173, George Combe, *op. cit.*, I, 86, III, 12, W. H. Daniels, *The Temperance Reformation and its Great Reformers* (Cincinnati, 1878), vii; *The Slave States*, I, 419.

drinking custom Harriet Martineau, who preceded Buckingham to America by a few years, saw intemperance as the vice which was poisoning society, and other English travellers more or less agreed with her judgment

Buckingham noted many examples of American drinking customs Both in the North and in the South he saw the grog-shops, public houses, and confectioneries—the designation depending upon the social status of the persons who frequented the place—where drinking and smoking went on day and night, attended by what he believed to be its inevitable consequences—fights, riots, duels, and murders, seductions, adulteries, and rapes In Kentucky he watched drunkards pounding the doors of whisky shops at six o'clock in the morning, throughout the West he found that spirits, in spite of the growing competition of patent cure-alls, were the common family medicine, and wherever he went "the bartender" was "a local factotum," who let hotel rooms, designated boarding-houses, furnished whatever directions a stranger needed, and gave the reputation of any one about whom one might inquire "The barroom" was one of America's typical institutions

Buckingham also observed other sorts of drinking-places, quoting a New Haven preacher's report on the bars and dram shops of that city as evidence of their diversity The report is a good example of the temperance advocates' view of the situation which they were fighting

There are now in the city, exclusive of Fair Haven, Cedar Hill, and Westville, 80 places where liquor is sold, a few weeks since there were 90, and in 1835, there were 104 Of the 80 now existing, 61 sell by dram, contrary to the law, not having a tavern license, and 18 sell without any license, being thereby liable to a fine of 50 dollars for each offence In 1835, there were but 6 of the last named shops Not less than twelve of the above, besides taverns, sell on the Sabbath Fourteen of the worst character are kept by foreigners Gambling is constantly practised in many of these shops, and all, or nearly all, the evils usually connected with intemperance, must be charged upon them and those who uphold them

The keepers of these shops do not conduct their business in an open and undisguised manner Most of them keep their bar in a back room, seen by none except those who frequent it Others, who keep little else but liquor, cover their windows with a curtain, evidently to hide their bottles and screen their customers .

A short time since, while one of the unhappy victims of these grog shops, a husband and a father, was lying upon his death bed, his wife

and children standing by his side, a group of some eight or ten of his brother victims reeled into the room, and gathered around him The scene was awful indeed Out of 100 adults who have died the past year in this city, *thirty-three* have gone to a drunkard's grave, and in almost every case, the ruin may be directly traced to some of these drunkard-making establishments Boys who came here from the country uncorrupted, in a short time were sent back to their parents, unfitted to pursue their business—*utterly ruined*

There is one other place, of which brief notice will be taken, *it is kept by a foreigner*, and is almost entirely sustained by the patronage of young men and boys, and is accessible on the Sabbath The front room is fitted up as a confectionery, the middle room for eating and drinking, and the backroom and upper rooms for no better purposes A gentleman states, that a short time since he saw in the middle room *ten or twelve lads*, apparently connected with respectable families, in familiar conversation with the very pleasant woman who commonly attends The boys appeared to be perfectly at home, and after a while one of the number suggested that it was about time to take something to drink, but another, restrained by the presence of the gentleman alluded to, gave the wink to the rest, and the drinking was postponed This place is doing great mischief, and it would seem that the proprietor was conducting it in such a manner as to scatter among us, to a fearful extent, the worst vices of the French metropolis

There are places of the same sort in the immediate vicinity of our principal literary institution, kept by persons from abroad, and one by a foreigner A gentleman who visited the backroom of one of them states that it is a complete vestibule to the pit Young men were congregated there in great numbers, and the drinking and swearing were perfectly astounding ²⁰

The English traveller, however, was not unmindful of the fact that "the old Americans" also drank and got drunk In his account of Boston, he recorded that a grandson of John Hancock was fined as a common drunkard "He had on a tattered frock coat, out at the elbows, and rusty with age, worse trousers, dirty and ragged, old pumps, so broken that his unwashed stockings were seen through them, and without vest or cravat" ²¹

In addition to painting these vivid scenes of "the drinking hells," the temperance propaganda portrayed the reactions of drunkenness upon community and family life. In 1836 Joseph Livesey, the father of English teetotalism, published an account of his experiences in an ordinary American back-country settlement inhabited mostly by

²⁰ *Eastern and Western States*, I, 409 *et seq* , quoting the Reverend Leonard Bacon's *Discourse on the Traffic in Spirituous Liquors*

²¹ *Ibid* , I, 46

farmers A few passages show well enough the tenor of the anti-liquor argument

This family lives in a little hut, filled with filth past description. When I saw them, their dirty ragged children were sitting on the floor, making a dinner of potatoes. There was no furniture in the room, except a rough table, two or three old chairs, and a filthy bunch of rags which they used for a bed. The mother looked intelligent, but degraded, and said her husband was a habitual drunkard — he would come home drunk, curse and swear, and pound her, order her to get him victuals, and often to cook what was not in the house, and whip her if she did not, and she had to go to the neighbours to save her life. At one time, he came home in a rage, and told her to cook him some meat, d— quick. She told him that there was none in the house. He told her she was a — liar, for he bought fourteen pounds the night before (and he did, but he lost it going home) and she had better cook it or he would pay her for it. He was so mad he kicked me, and struck me on the head with a dipper, and cut such a gash, that the blood streamed all over me, and he pounded and kicked me until he got tired, and then I went to the neighbours and got my head bound up, and I was sick three days after it.

This family consists of an old man and his wife debased lower than brutes by drunkenness. They quarrel and fight, and often the sound of "murder" is heard in their dwelling at the hour of midnight. They are miserably poor, and work enough to get a bare subsistence and a good supply of whisky. They generally carry whisky home on a Saturday night, and spend the Sabbath in drinking, cursing, and fighting. They are filthy and loathsome in the extreme, and lost to all decency and shame. The woman gets drunk at the groceries and the taverns, and then is so boisterous that they turn her out into the street, and she is often pelted and driven through the streets by those who are no better than herself.

This man is kind and benevolent when sober, and once possessed a handsome property. On his wedding day, he received a companion, with about 3,000 dollars, all of which the generous and confiding girl placed in his hands for safe keeping. Now, after enjoying his society eleven years, this intelligent, yet distressed wife, gives the following relation. About six years since, my husband began to drink, and has followed it up ever since. He spent all his property, and all I possessed also. When he is sober, he is very good to me and the children (four in number), but he gets liquor and it puts the very devil in him.²²

Newspapers, the temperance periodicals, and almanacs continually harped upon these horrible effects of liquor-drinking. From time to

²² Joseph Livesey, *Two American Villages, Peterboro' and Auburn, the one reformed, the other unreformed. The result of a careful visitation* (Preston, 1836), *passim*

time *The Pittsburg Mercury* entertained its readers with accounts, often copied from other sheets, which were harrowing in their details. One such excerpt narrated a Virginia drunkard's fight with the devil upon going home from his evening in the grog-shop; he met a goat and engaged in a butting contest with the animal, which he took for the horned lord of hell. The drunkard emerged from the fray with a battered and bloody head. Another account detailed the awful burning of a Maine toper, who fell into the fire of his own hearth. Cider drinkers, because they pleaded the mildness of their beverage, came in for special castigation, the *Journal of the American Temperance Union* described them as the most brutish of all inebriates and enumerated their ailments as rheumatiz, inflamed eye-lids, nose-bleeds, sores, ulcers, and premature trembling of the hand and head. The same authority reported that an old apple orchard was sure to be surrounded by orphans, widows, and poverty. In this connection it should be noticed that the temperance workers were much antagonized by the part "hard cider" played in the Whig campaign of 1840. The same paper summarized the results of the use of alcohol in a passage that deserves to rank as a classic among anti-liquor polemics:

It [alcohol] expelleth reason, drowns memory, defaceth beauty, diminisheth strength, inflameth the blood, causeth internal, external, and incurable wounds, is a witch to the senses, a devil to the soul, a thief to the purse, a beggar's companion, the wife's woe, the children's sorrow, the picture of a beast, the madman's prompter, and a pandora to the human family.²³

Uncle Ben's Great Western Almanac for 1844 answered those who sang the praises of wine with a counter-blast in favour of water:

Some poet, in singing the praises of wine, says—"The sun drinks, the earth drinks—the flowers drink—and therefore man should drink." Certainly say we, but with the sun, earth, and flowers, let him drink pure wholesome water.²⁴

Uncle Ben also furnished his readers with an interpretation of history. He explained that the wines of Capua, not the Roman armies, destroyed the armies of Hannibal and pointed to "the inebriate hero of Macedon" as the foremost example of the suddenly disastrous effects of liquor-drinking. All time and all the world furnished data for the temperance argument.

²³ *The Journal of the American Temperance Union*, I (1837), 49.

²⁴ *Uncle Ben's Great Western Almanac for 1844*.

Like every propagandist, the temperance workers undoubtedly drew too darkly the evils they opposed, and in the same manner they probably saw too brightly the benefits they expected from abstinence. Buckingham observed the good effects of temperance in several parts of America, particularly in Plymouth, Providence, and Ballston Centre, a rural village in New York under the influence of Edward C. Delavan, whose farmstead was nearby. Plymouth and Providence seemed more orderly and prosperous than the usual run of American cities, and Ballston Centre, if one can believe Buckingham, was almost a teetotaller's paradise. Deaths did not average two per cent a year, and longevity was the rule—ages of eighty and ninety were ordinary, poverty was almost unknown—only one in a population of 1,152 was receiving public aid, and crime was unheard of. Moreover, the farm labourers commonly had savings accounts or investments in stocks, and the farmers, almost without exception, owned their lands. Better still, from the point of view of the temperance advocate, was their refusal to sell grain to distilleries or to make apples into cider. Buckingham was impressed by the gaiety which marked the social intercourse of the community and by its quiet Sundays devoted to religious services. But he did not explain this felicity as the result of temperance alone. Part of the communal well-being was due to the peculiar conditions existing in rural America—the equitable distribution of wealth, the diffusion of education, and the truly democratic sentiments of the farmers. It is to Buckingham's credit that he never viewed either the evils of drunkenness or the benefits of temperance as isolated phenomena, always they were products of and parts in a general social structure which as a totality was the prime force shaping conditions of life for the people.²⁵

The 'thirties and 'forties brought the consolidation of those convictions which were to carry forward the anti-liquor crusade, and to round out the teetotaller's case his other arguments deserve mention. Delavan made a notable contribution to "the cause" by exposing, first, the adulterations of wines and spirits, especially the high-priced imported brands (Pittsburgh of the late 1830's enjoyed the benefits of "rectified" whisky), and, second, the nasty conditions which sometimes surrounded the manufacture of malt-liquors. He brought down upon his head the wrath of the brewers of Albany by asserting that they drew their water supply from a pond

²⁵ *America, Historical, Descriptive, and Statistical*, II, 413 *et seq.*, III, 503

into which was drained the refuse of a slaughter house, the sewage of a part of the city, and a creek which flowed through a cemetery. Unfortunately for the brewers, when they sued him, he proved all this—and more, too, in the ooze at the bottom of the pond were found the bodies of cats, dogs, hogs, and horses. Doctor Thomas Sewall brought to light horrific facts of a different order. He designed a set of coloured charts showing the effects of alcohol upon the human stomach. By 1844 these charts had been introduced into the New York schools, when the charts were sent abroad, they were exhibited at public meetings, causing sensations everywhere—even in Constantinople. The shaping of the temperance case from physiological data was the work of many men, but in the long run perhaps no other anti-liquor argument carried so much conviction as did the lurid pictures of stomachs, livers, and kidneys which found their way into the textbooks used in the American schools. Another form of graphic presentation attempted to depict the general evils of liquor-drinking. A certain Mr Wiltberger, as reported by *The Philadelphia Public Ledger*, designed a map which showed the geography of intemperance. Between the Ocean of Animal Appetite and the Ocean of Eternity lay the states False Security, False Pleasure, False Comfort, False Hope, Total Indifference, and Ruin. Near the centre of the state of False Pleasure was Beer Lake, and in it were Palsy and Dropsy Islands. Rat Soup River ran from Beer Lake into the Sea of Intemperance, which was connected with the Sea of Eternity by the Strait of Devil's Glory. The chief cities of these several states were Glee Town, Spree Town, Swear Town, and Duel Town. Deacon Jones's Distillery was given a prominent location—a reminder of the fact that many prominent church members made money by the manufacture and sale of spirits.

There were certain new contentions which the temperance advocates either contrived by an appeal to scholarship or discovered in a changing society. In 1838 and 1839 Doctor Elphalet Nott lectured to the students of Union College on the Biblical admonitions and injunctions against intemperance. Noah was not popular among the teetotallers. More important for the future of "the cause" was the discovery that drunken employees and intricate machines did not work well together. In 1839 the American Temperance Union reported that vessels upon which the captains allowed no spirits were to be given lower insurance rates than those on which the officers held to the old custom of issuing liquor to the crews. About

the same time employers and employees began to experiment with temperance as a promoter of better workmanship and higher wages Simultaneously there occurred a reversal of opinion that spirits were efficacious as a medicine and as a relief for fatigue Quite as important to the advance of temperance sentiment as these opinions was the discovery that abstinence did not mean the end of gaiety, good-feeling, and conviviality When Buckingham was lecturing in Philadelphia, he attended a political meeting held for Henry Clay by Matthew Newkirk, a prominent figure in the American Temperance Union The distinguished Kentuckian was surprised that such a meeting could be a success without liquor, he admitted to Buckingham that he did not have the courage to follow Newkirk's precedent ²⁶

In presenting the case for temperance Buckingham touched upon all these arguments, not even failing to mention the theory of spontaneous combustion His knowledge of the Mediterranean and the Orient always provided him with good examples, historical and demographic, of the effects of both intemperance and abstinence But regardless of his success as an advocate, he often wished for greater powers In 1836, when addressing the British and Foreign Temperance Society, he asserted the desire for "the tongue of an angel" in order to do justice to his theme In 1838, when the celebration of the Fourth of July came with its usual debauches and subsequent disasters, he pleaded for a new war of independence and a new array of patriots

"Who is the tyrant—who the slave?"
A thousand anxious voices cry—
Alas! the tenants of the grave,
Could they but rise, might best reply

The tyrant is—DESTROYING DRINK—
Who chains his slaves in links of fire,
The slave is he whose manhood sinks
Beneath his willing sceptre dire

O! for a Washington's pure name,
A Franklin's mind—a Hancock's zeal,
A Henry's eloquence—whose flame
Should kindle, in their country's weal,

²⁶ Marcus E. Cross, *The Mirror of Temperance, and History of the Temperance Reform* (Philadelphia, 1849), 96, *Report of the American Temperance Union*, 1839, appendix, 44, *Ibid.*, 1844, 10, *The Philadelphia Public Ledger*, May 15, 1838, *America, Historical, Descriptive, and Statistic*, II, 212

Ten thousand thousand glowing tongues,
 To form, to-day, a sacred band,
 In every hall to bid their songs
 Swell high for Temperance through the land.²⁷

If one can believe *The Boston Transcript*, certain of the temperance converts were not lacking in the patriotic fanaticism which knew how to deal with tyrants and traitors they tarred, feathered, and burned a barrel of whisky.²⁸

4. AMERICA THE DEMOCRATIC CIVILIZATION

Buckingham had surveyed the ruins of *Babylon*, he had struggled with the sprawling growth of *Manchester*, now he observed a civilization which, although it lacked a symbolical name, was being watched more or less closely by the world at large and particularly by those statesmen who, in the late 1830's, guided European destinies and, like Parker of Sheffield, yearned not after democracy. It is fairly certain that Melbourne, Guizot, Metternich, and Nicholas of Russia yearned after nothing which was exemplified by Andrew Jackson (except his proud masculinity), whose era saw American democracy assume a unique position among the social structures of history and the contemporary age.

"The distinguished Oriental traveller" visited every state and territory of the then existing American union, except Florida and Arkansas, and recorded his observations in eight volumes.²⁹ In general, the reviewers were not impressed by what he reported, finding in it nothing new except occasional intimate details.³⁰ They complained of his verbosity and charged him with compiling his materials from easily accessible sources, especially newspapers, which they considered of little value. As a matter of fact he was guilty of these crimes, but he committed them for reasons which a

²⁷ *Journal of the American Temperance Union*, II (1838), 103.

²⁸ *The Boston Transcript*, October 20, 1838.

²⁹ *America, Historical, Descriptive, and Statistic, including a Journey through the Northern or Free States* (3 vols., London, 1841), *The Slave States of America, embracing Travels through the Southern States from Baltimore to New Orleans* (2 vols., London, 1842), *The Eastern and Western States of America, from Maine to the Rivers Mississippi and Missouri* (3 vols., London, 1842).

³⁰ *The Athenaeum* 1841, 437, 456, *The Athenaeum* 1842, 268, 1134. *The Spectator*, XV (1842), 302, *Eclectic Review*, LXXV (1842), 485, *The Westminster Review*, XL (1843), 20 *et seq.*

later day may think valid His first care was to escape the accusations of prejudice which had been hurled so violently and so frequently at other travellers Over and over again he frankly declared that he quoted a local authority in order to avoid the criticism of having overstated the fact he was reporting Although he was convinced it required no ingenuity to compose an account of American life that every patriot would damn as a scandalous libel, he believed that his fellow travellers often judged Americans by the wrong standards

We take the manners of the best educated and most polished circles in England as the test of excellence, and if the Americans do not come up to this, in all they say and do, we set them down as vulgar, rude, and uncivilized But we forget, that in England there yet remain some ten millions of the labouring classes among whom may be found as much of vulgarity, rudeness, ignorance, and intemperance, as in any classes of the lowest population of this country If the English nobility of the reigns of Elizabeth, James, Charles could be raised from their graves, and transplanted to America, with no other recollection of habits or customs than those common to the best circles in England in *their* day, they would be surprised at the comparative refinement and polish of American manners, as contrasted with these, and would award to them the palm of superiority ³¹

He reminded his readers also, whether English or American, that, when patriotic feelings, class prestige, and pecuniary interests were involved, no people were without prejudices

The traveller witnessed the full operation of that principle of social equality which was distinctively American General Winfield Scott ate at a common hotel table, with a mechanic at his elbow one day and a store keeper there the next President Van Buren went to church alone and was never accompanied on other occasions by more than one attendant In Dover, Maine, a group of factory girls refused to attend a singing class until they had voted on the proposal, the same girls also would not avail themselves of the privilege of buying half-fare railroad tickets because travelling at a reduced rate would be either enduring an inferior social status or enjoying a special favour, alike contemptible to their democratic eyes Persons employed in menial services felt that livery was a badge of social inferiority When the English minister drove about New York in a coach with his English driver and footman in splendid uniforms, men in the street shouted derisively, "Hurrah for the

³¹ *Slave States*, I, 470

Englishmen! Hurrah for the Englishmen! It takes two Englishmen to make one nigger" The American practice was to have a single negro as coachman Along the western stage roads Buckingham's baggage, which consisted of several trunks and hat-boxes, excited the curiosity of hostlers and farmers, who could not understand what he kept in them They assured him that one trunk was enough for any one and that no one ever needed more than one hat at a time.

But equality was no more typical of the American spirit than was the desire for economic gain The economic motive, stripped of those restraints which the traditional culture of Europe sometimes opposed to mere money-making, expressed itself in a hurry, bustle, and speculation

Enterprise has been spoken of as characteristic of our nation, "Try," is the first word, the meaning of which is thoroughly mastered Boys are men before they are loosed from their leading strings They are educated in the belief that every man must be the architect of his own fortune Boys argue upon polemics, political economy, party politics, the mysteries of trade, the destinies of nations Dreams of ambition, or of wealth, nerve the arm which drives the hoop—the foot, which gives the ball its impetus Toys are stock in trade Barter is fallen into by instinct, as a young duck takes to water ³²

With such a beginning, according to another journal, life became a furious business

We are born in a hurry , we are educated at speed We make a fortune with the wave of a wand, and lose it in a like manner—to re-make and re-lose it in the twinkling of an eye Our body is a locomotive, travelling at the rate of ten leagues an hour, our spirit is a high-pressure engine, our life resembles a shooting star, and death surprises us like an electric shock ³³

Although there was no envy and discontent in American faces, neither was there repose, every one seemed eager with that spirit which made a virtue out of being the first in a coach at the beginning of a journey and the first to alight at its end

This enterprising and speculative spirit and not Jackson's financial policy explained the economic distress which was to be seen in all parts of the country In New York lines of care marked the faces of the men, who seemed to hurry blindly along the streets, and fires were common These phenomena were the certain signs

³² *America, Historical, Descriptive, and Statistical*, I, 171, quoting *The New York Sun*, February 2, 1838

³³ *Ibid*, II, 444

of what in those days was called a "panic" New Orleans had no confidence in bank notes Cleveland exhibited "hard times" on every corner Portland held money in "a death grasp" *The Baltimore Sun* declared that the annals of the civilized world furnished no parallel to the presumption and arrogance of American banks New York jails were filled with debtors, and the abolition of imprisonment for debt was a live issue before both the state and national legislatures Pittsburgh suffered greatly on account of unemployment, a planing-mill and a plough-works had shut down, and two-thirds of the town's two hundred dray-carts were idle The mechanics either went fishing or trudged into the country to work for eighteen cents a day In Chicago real estate projects had been laid out along streets that stretched away from the Lake Front for four miles, and the lots had been sold as many as ten times in one day Bangor, Maine, told the prize story of a "boom" when the speculation in timberland was at its height, any one who came to town with less than five thousand dollars was sent to the poorhouse

Buckingham believed that the prevailing low state of commercial morality, which the banks had helped to press still lower by suspending specie payments, would decline further, unless American business enterprise became more orderly

Although the sentiment of social equality was universal and economic freedom paramount, American society was stratified, not along the traditional class lines of Europe but in terms of wealth, fashion, and family position peculiar to the new world To be "among the oldest and first families" of a community was to possess social prestige, to be a person "of whom no one knew anything" was to be denied entrance to what everywhere was called "the best circles" In the large northern cities there was an "upper class" marked off from the common people, in the South the class lines were even more sharply drawn Middle-class northerners were a mixed lot of merchants, traders, lawyers, doctors, and clergymen, who knew neither the pride of wealth nor the worries of poverty Lacking a social position to maintain, they had no dread of associating with any one After a four months' residence in New York, Buckingham thought that the lower classes were much better off than the similar groups in England³⁴ But obser-

³⁴ *America, Historical, Descriptive, and Statistical*, I, 59 "You do not see anywhere in the streets persons asking alms, or labouring under any visible lack of the necessaries of life, nor do the offensive and disgusting scenes so

vations in other eastern cities did not confirm this first impression, and in the end he concluded that destitution, want, crime intemperance, and misery were much more prevalent than one might suppose, considering the abundance and cheapness of food

Beneath the general level of an economic competence, which was usually reported as the normal American standard of living, he discovered a large section of people who, although not in abject poverty, lived not without discomfort and insecurity. Worse still was the attitude of indifference toward the lot of these people, indeed, the public prints displayed a levity in reporting their conditions of life. To prove the point he quoted a New York account of a police raid in a tenement. At the head of the story was the caption, "Well Filled," the meaning of which is evident from the following excerpt:

They found that it was tenemented by seventy-two women, sixty-five men, and one hundred and thirty-five children exclusive of the *live stock* attendant upon such a family.³⁵

Among the rural population, which constituted the great majority, Buckingham found the same distribution of wealth that was to be seen in the cities. In every community there were a few wealthy landowners who lived in comfortable affluence, but a considerable portion of the people, certainly more than was usually reported, were having a hard time in making a living. Buckingham arrived at this opinion after observations in New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and the South. The first state showed him the typical Americans whose interests were basic to the paramount democracy—the farmers who owned their own land and tilled it, unaided by hired labour except during the planting and harvest seasons. These farmers, like the middle-class townsmen, were among the most intelligent and best informed persons whom he met. Their houses were comfortable, their families had adequate opportunities for education and eco-

often witnessed in the great thoroughfares of London and the other large cities and towns of Britain, in the persons of drunken men and women, with filthy and ragged children, deprived of their due by the intemperance of their parents, ever meet the eye in the public thoroughfares of the city at least, any more the painful spectacle of young and miserable females earning a wretched and precarious subsistence by the wages of prostitution. That there does exist both poverty and intemperance, and that prostitution and crime accompany these in the less frequented quarters of this city, there can be no doubt, but they do not obtrude themselves on the public eye, in every part of the principal streets, as they do in London. "

³⁵ *America, Historical, Descriptive, and Statistical*, I, 154.

nomic advancement, they realized from eight to ten per cent a year on their investment, and at an early age they retired to devote their time to politics and religion. In their neighbourhoods doors were left unbolted at night, and the jails were empty.

Journeys through the South and on the Mississippi brought the traveller in contact with the frontier. Alabama showed him the crude life of the frontier farmer.

Every member of the family must work hard, from daylight till dark, the women as well as the men, and the children as well as the grown people. We saw many boys and girls, of not more than six or seven years of age, some using small axes, and others assisting in domestic duties. They were all apparently unhealthy, parents and children looked pale and haggard, over-worked in body, and over-pressed with thought and anxiety of mind.³⁸

In New Orleans he heard much about Texas. In St. Louis he was impressed by the vigour and spirit of the plainsmen. A short excursion up the Des Moines River gave him a glimpse of the destructive influence of white civilization upon the Indians, and he concluded that the English had done no worse with the Hindus than the Americans had with the Indians.

From the aristocratic circles of the Atlantic seaboard to the rude frontier settlements of the South and West, American society struck the friendly observer, as it had many less kindly ones, as possessing certain vulgar manners and tastes. He was quite willing to agree with the usual report that the Americans were "the grossest feeders in the world." Everywhere, even in New Haven, water-closets were at the end of a long backyard, and bedrooms were universally poorly furnished and worsely kept. The use of tobacco was universal, the "chaw," "spit," and the mellifluous "squirt" were ubiquitous. The primary object of every man's ambition was to purchase costly dresses for the females of his family, who found going to church the best opportunity for displaying the finery. Westerners in the East always made themselves conspicuous by frequenting the most notorious places and buying the most expensive liquors. Then they "went broke," they "cleared out for the west" in quest of another "lucky strike."

The current "crime wave" also interested the English spectator. During his first stay in New York, over one hundred crimes were committed. New Orleans was overrun with robbers, cut-throats, and

³⁸ *The Slave States*, I, 231.

incendiaries Mobile reported murders as numerous as broken banks Even Philadelphia was losing its Quaker distinction According to *The New York Observer* for September 21, 1838, which he quoted, "the most orderly city in America" had witnessed during the preceding month thirteen fires, four railroad accidents, six stabbings, two attempts to stab, one murder, three suicides, five drownings, two attempts to kill, and four sudden deaths He also cited *The Philadelphia Public Ledger* in support of the view that rudeness and incendiaryism were on the increase, it complained that the railway station agents conducted themselves in ways fit only for the prize ring *The St Louis Pennant* was gravely alarmed at the situation

The onward march of crime must be checked—and speedily, otherwise the world will revert back to its primitive state of barbarism, and spurn all law but one—that "might is right!"³⁷

In fact, wherever James Silk went, the newspapers teemed with the reports of tragedies which were "singular," of accidents which were "melancholy" and "shocking," and of murders which were "horrid" He recorded many examples of the disorderliness and reckless disregard of life which he came to conceive as essential elements in American life There was a fist fight in Congress The speaker of the Arkansas legislature killed a colleague with a bowie knife A Mississippi judge disembowelled a man in a row over a coat A Louisville printer hit a fellow workman over the head with a mallet A St Louis negro was lynched by burning in a slow fire An Illinois woman killed a man after he had been acquitted of the murder of her brother Poisonings were almost too numerous to mention Near Boston some women stormed a church wedding On another occasion some Massachusetts men poured alcohol on a horse and burned it Yankee ingenuity also displayed itself in crime a girl, feigning seduction, prepared an infant of dough and nailed it in a coffin, exposing the face through an isinglass cover With this trick she attempted to extort three hundred dollars from a young doctor

After observing such enormities, he concluded that there was no public opinion in favour of law enforcement, especially in the South, where violent conduct was more infrequent than in the North:

The truth is, that the community want either the virtue or the courage to see the laws executed on the murderers, and thus it is, that criminals,

³⁷ *Eastern and Western States*, III, 130

being left to go on bail, make their escape for a season, and then return again Even when they remain, the juries will not convict them, so that impunity is thus granted to the further perpetration of such deeds ³⁸

Brothers, another Englishman, who saw America as a "mobocracy," concurred in this harsh judgment, recording that in Pennsylvania, where death was the penalty for murder, a killing occurred every week, but there had not been an execution in seventeen years.

The "Liberal Reformer" did not share the critical view of American political institutions held by several of his fellow travellers On the contrary he believed that universal manhood suffrage, frequent elections, and the vote by ballot were vindicated by American democracy He was particularly impressed by the composition of the Pennsylvania legislature After listing the members by occupations—forty-four farmers, twenty lawyers, nine merchants, eight physicians, three hatters, two gentlemen, two bricklayers, two carpenters, two cabinet makers, one coach maker, one saddler, one blacksmith, and one tanner—he pointed out that they were not only as capable in their legislative efforts as the aristocratic House of Commons but also as decorous in their proceedings Nor did he find American elections more disorderly than English, aristocratic parties—the Whigs in the East, the Democrats in the South, and the Tories in England—were responsible for riots and fights at the polls

But these opinions did not blind him to the coarser features of democracy The chief American parties represented the broad lines of social stratification The Democrats were the "huge-pawed unwashed"—"the people" The Whigs, as their opponents described them, were "counter jumpers"—"the ruffled shirt gentry," in his own phrase, "the wealthy and genteel" He disliked them for their sycophancy They denounced the Democrats as atheists, infidels, agrarians, and incendiaries, who, lacking all honesty and piety, were eager to pull down American institutions, to seize the property of the rich, to let the criminals out of jail, to abolish all government, and to produce anarchy He recognized all this as the American form of the reactionary wail which he had heard long before in India and not long since in England The Whigs were like the English Tories because they looked back to "the good old times", worse still, they were like their English counter-

³⁸ *The Slave States*, I, 286

parts because they talked of liberal measures but did not carry them out

During the campaign of 1840 the Whigs eulogized Harrison as a worker and as the possessor of "a few acres of land" in order to make the poor people believe that he was one of them. The criticism of Van Buren for buying Royal Wilton rugs and satin-covered footstools, as well as the outcry against the administration for having failed to pass a national bankruptcy law, were meant only to deepen this illusion of Whig sympathies with the people. "The Wall Street Aristocrats and the Rag Barons of the Stock Exchange" voted funds for orphans, respectable-aged, indigent females, poor widows, small children, and helpless seamen with a similar hypocritical intention. All this was "a war of words", in Buckingham's opinion the true Whig policy was to support corporate wealth, to maintain a restricted suffrage, to silence the abolitionist agitation, and to uphold protective tariff. The high tariff was a safeguard to the prosperity of the working men, as was well said by one of their Pennsylvania adherents, "God forbid that we should ever see the day when our honest mechanic, our hardy yeoman, shall be measured in the price of his labour by a foreign rule." Harrison's election was a signal for wild celebrations. In Illinois his supporters set fire to the prairie, in New York they declared that the Aurora Borealis took on a new splendour in honour of their success.

Such enthusiasm warranted the traveller's suspicion of the methods by which the triumph was achieved. Pennsylvania showed him Whig methods. Fictitious names appeared on the voting-lists. Blank naturalization papers were filled out for immigrants. Hordes of politicians and police officers, the latter on the pretext of maintaining order, swarmed about the polls to watch and intimidate the voters. Bribes were openly offered and received. Votes were handled carelessly. Frequently gamblers appointed the judges of elections. Occasionally the election papers were lost. New York Democrats, he found, were skilful at similar tricks.

In assessing the intellectual aspect of democratic culture, Buckingham condemned much and applauded little.

The popular mind had three prime attributes—boasting, a crude humour, and an affinity for quackery of all varieties. Americans would not admit of any inferiority to other countries in anything, "whether in heat or cold, wind or rain, thunder or lightning—as well as in arts and arms, in enterprise and skill." They were a nation

of "boasters," and often their sense of humour amplified the boasts
He copied a bit of doggerel produced by a Connecticut Yankee

Old Connecticut, to frogs once fatal,
Is the state I call my natal,
Which most other States surpasses—
In pumpkins—johnny-cakes—molasses—
Rogues—priests—attorneys—quack-physicians—
Blue-laws, and black-coat politicians,
Where many a father's son—yes, plenty—
Is father of a son at twenty,
And many a mother's maid has been
A mother made at seventeen,
And many more, at twenty-seven,
Pray more for husbands than for heaven ³⁹

In Illinois, Lincoln's country, he heard a story about three farmers who had the ague, the first shook out his teeth, the second shook off his clothes, every thread in them falling apart, and the third shook down his house and died beneath its ruins From Kentucky came a yarn about "a young buster" who imitated the crowing of a cock so well that he got the sun up at two o'clock in the morning One-half of the advertisements in the newspapers puffed panaceas, which, like Jew David's Hebrew Plasters, recently introduced into Detroit from Palestine, were certain remedies for "rheumatiz," weakness of the stomach, colds, or what have you Every new attraction was swarmed about by the curious and the gullible, and "the black arts" found innumerable patrons who sought advice on marriage, law suits, journeys, investments, dreams, sickness, and death Philadelphia caused the friendly critic to observe that no other country was so plentifully supplied with quackery as America

Religious frauds were particularly abundant Mormonism was only the latest delusion At Geneva, New York, lived an American counterpart of Joanna Southcott, Jemima Wilkinson, who, to demonstrate her powers as the Messiah, proposed to walk upon the lake A great crowd gathered to witness the marvel At her first step from the shore the water came up to her ankles, but the crowd cheered, affirming its faith, and she, accepting its protestations, drew back from the water Buckingham wondered why "the lynch law" was not raised against her, so obvious was the fraud

As a whole he found American religious practices confusing, although not without pleasing features He admired the New York

³⁹ *Eastern and Western States*, II, 162.

farmers who went to church two and three times each Sunday The singing and organ selections were generally "sweet," and the churches were usually comfortable in both their furnishings and their heating arrangements There were no cushioned pews for local notables and no bare benches marked "Free to the poor" as in England But class lines manifested themselves in other ways Among the poor there was a religious emotionalism which contrasted sharply with the cold formalities of those sects like the Presbyterian in Philadelphia, the Episcopalian in New York, and the Congregational in Boston, which found their adherents among the wealthy In the West and South there was a lack of religious interest among a large part of the population Not one-fifth of the inhabitants of Louisville belonged to any church In Georgia scarcely half the families possessed Bibles

The churches were generally conservative in their outlook upon public policy In Cleveland a preacher deplored all political agitation as disturbing to social order, speaking from the text, "Godliness, with contentment, is the great gain" In Salem a minister attacked all reformers, describing them as "a cloud of locusts", his English auditor characterized the harangue as "the ne plus ultra of conservative doctrine, doubly and triply distilled" Abolitionists came in for much clerical castigation Boston displayed its conservatism in the dismissal of a minister who discussed "exciting topics" from the pulpit, his offence was the advocacy of temperance But there were other causes for dismissal a highly orthodox clergyman of the same city was unfrocked for "attempts on the chastity of female servants"

Although Buckingham was on friendly terms with the Methodists on account of their temperance views, mutual sentiments did not prevent him from viewing their religious conduct with a critical eye

I had seen the Howling Dervishes in Turkey, the Faqueers and Pilgrims in India and Arabia, the Santons in Egypt and Syria, the Ranters and Jumpers in England, and the Shakers in America, but among them all, I never witnessed such convulsive excitement, and religious frenzy, than at this Methodist Revival in Carlisle [Pennsylvania] ⁴⁰

The evangelist left the pulpit and went to the stage below it, where he exhorted his auditors to save themselves from a deeper hell than the one they were in He warned them that they were already at

⁴⁰ *Eastern and Western States*, I, 516.

the brink of a cataract, which would throw them into a fiery lake where they would burn for ever. The elders cried and groaned. Young females on "the anxious seat"—the front benches where they could receive the special attention of the preacher—were in convulsions. At least twenty persons were uttering loud and mournful prayers, and the crowd was like an assembly of maniacs.

In the South Buckingham came to understand certain less devotional pleasures which featured the relations of ministers and female penitents.

The ministers employed in this revival were very numerous, and many of them young and handsome men. When they saw a female under excitement, they would leave the desk beneath the pulpit, and go to her in the pew, take her by the hand, and squeeze it with ardour, look stedfastly into her eyes, stroke her on the neck, and head, and back, with the palm of the hand, give her spiritual consolation, and sometimes kneel down with her to pray on the same cushion. One of these was a married lady of great personal beauty, who was attending with her two daughters, but there was no husband or brother with them. The minister was so attracted by her beauty, and overwhelmed by her state of excitement, that after the prayer he placed his head beneath her bonnet, and attempted to "salute her with a holy kiss." She drew back and refused his embrace. Her friend, my informant, saw this, and was in the act of rising to proclaim the offence, and to resent it on the spot, but the lady prudently prevented this, by a timely intimation with her hand, of her wish for him not to move or notice it, and assigned as her reason afterwards, that if made public at the time, it might have broken up the meeting, and brought a scandal on revivals generally, whereas this was but the offence of one man. The gentleman assured me, however, that this was not a solitary instance of such attempts, many of which were more successful, and that the moving of the ministers to and fro from pew to pew, their seizing the women by the hand, pressing and fondling various parts of their bodies, melting into tears with them, holding their hands together for a long period, and sometimes sustaining them in their arms from falling, were quite common.⁴¹

When business was slack and politics lagged, these religious furors, so the traveller concluded, provided an emotional release for a people whose tastes in literature and art were so stunted that they hardly knew the meaning of cultural enjoyments.

The contrast between conservatism and emotionalism in religion was paralleled by a contradiction between puritanism and licentiousness in speech. In some circles to speak of the tail of a horse

⁴¹ *The Slave States*, II, 137.

was deemed indelicate, and no respectable person ever mentioned such anatomical parts as hip and thigh. The more fastidious even edited the Holy Word. The curse pronounced on the serpent, "On thy belly shalt thou go," was read, "On thy stomach shalt thou go." But the American tongue had looser moments, well exemplified in the banter of hostlers and stage-coach drivers. On one occasion James Silk was shocked by the comments called forth by a picture on a stage-coach door. The scene showed a fashionably dressed beau embracing a lightly clad lady, who was reclining on a sofa. Just as Buckingham lifted the veil of American prosperity to discover poverty, so also did he break the "front" of American respectability to find the rawer life of the livery stables, of which there were more than a few in those horsy days.

But what Americans lacked in intellectual refinements they made up in benevolent sentiments. As the traveller went about the country, he was careful to visit charitable institutions. In Philadelphia he noted a dozen and was so pleased with the city's moral atmosphere that he wished to spread its influence far and wide. Boston, with societies for the advocacy of non-resistance, abolition, rights for women, and peace, impressed him as a leader in developing novel doctrines. Brooklyn showed him a gentleman who promoted a public cemetery without making a penny, the profits went for upkeep. Even southern planters, as they approached death, often discovered a spark of justice in their bosoms and liberated their slaves. James Silk was sceptical of this eleventh-hour benevolence, for he believed it to be motivated only by a selfish desire to escape the penalties of previous hardness of heart. He also remarked that in every country the poor are the most truly generous—what they give can hardly be spared, what the rich give is seldom, if ever, missed—and suggested that self-taxation by the rich at the rate of five per cent or more would solve the problem of unemployment.

In spite of the reputed shrewdness and utilitarian bent of the American mind, Buckingham believed it to be fundamentally emotional. Americans were among the most excitable people on earth, and their business, politics, and religion, as well as their benevolence, reflected the sentimental bias. City officials might cut off trees because the roots injured paving, lawyers might defend criminals by appealing to phrenology, the latest psychological fad, and newspapers might warn boys against walking on their hands because it brought on indigestion, but tradition nevertheless re-

tained its adherents, and patriotism was the universal virtue The New York state assembly conducted itself after the manner of the House of Lords, and Sunday all over the land was devoted to military parades, the soundest of traditional exercises Every political speech mentioned "the blood of our fathers," "the sons of liberty," "the ever glorious '76," "the star-spangled banner," and "the glorious sovereignty of the people" Fourth of July orators climaxed their harangues by proposing toasts, such as "The virtuous ladies of America over those of England" School books described how Englishmen slandered America and maligned France The patriotic legend on the Falmouth window had its American counterpart

Give an Englishman his mug of porter and his chunk of beef and he is contented,—POOR WRETCH! HE HAS NO IDEA OF ANY FELICITY MORE EXALTED Give a Frenchman "his fiddle and his frisk" and he is happy Give a Dutchman his kraut and pipe, and he sets himself down without one aspiration But an American is always "on the alert"—his mind is in constant activity—his hopes and fears are always excited ⁴²

When Buckingham went to Washington for international temperance day, he ran foul of that patriotic sheet, *The Native American* It protested against a foreign teacher hallooing impudent insinuations in American ears, decried the abject spirit of the Americans who bowed down before him, "as if he were some god," and notified him that he and his kind would not be tolerated much longer Native teachers and home-spun morals were good enough for true patriots He also encountered anti-abolition sentiments After his opening lectures in New York, which were attended by four or five blacks and three times as many "high yellows," he received several anonymous letters, warning him that his lectures would lose their popularity if he allowed coloured people to come and sit among the whites

Although Buckingham was a recognized enemy of the South's "peculiar institution," he did not allow his sentiments to blind him to its extenuating features He found many kind masters and mistresses, whom he credited with an honest desire to abolish slavery The domestic slaves were as well off as servants in middle-class English homes, and in Louisiana, where the French influences survived, there was a more kindly attitude toward the negro than in the states chiefly Anglo-Saxon in population He praised the

⁴² *Eastern and Western States*, I, 175.

Louisiana law which forbade selling the parents and children apart before the latter were twelve years old

But the evils of slavery did not escape his observing eye ⁴³ He deplored the denial of all educational opportunities to the negroes He was outraged by slave-breeding in Virginia The slave train was a horrifying spectacle And the field slaves were anything but the "healthy, laughing, contented beings" described by the southern

⁴³ *The Slave States*, I, 132 *et seq.* Buckingham's description of a rice plantation near Savannah gives a fair picture of the negro field-workers "The estate was considered to be a valuable one, and under a fair condition of management, not among the best nor among the worst, but just such an average plantation as we wished to examine The dwellings for the negroes were built of wood, ranged in rows of great uniformity, raised a little above the ground, each building containing two or more rooms, with a fire place for two We saw also the nursery for the children, and the sickroom or hospital for those who were hurt or diseased

"The slaves are up by daylight, and every one who is able to work, from eight or nine years old and upwards, repair to their several departments of field-labour They do not return to their houses either to breakfast or dinner, but have their food cooked for them in the field, by negroes appointed for that duty They continue thus at work till dark, and then return to their dwellings There is no holiday Saturday afternoon, or any other time throughout the year, except a day or two at Christmas, but from daylight to dark, every day except Sunday, they are at their labour Their allowance of food consists of a peck, or two gallons, of Indian corn per week, half that quantity for working boys and girls, and a quarter for little children This corn they are obliged to grind themselves, after their hours of labour are over, and it is then boiled in water, and made into hominey, but without anything to eat with it, neither bread, rice, fish, meat, potatoes, or butter, boiled corn and water only, and barely a sufficient quantity of this for subsistence

"Of clothes, the men and boys had a coarse woollen jacket and trousers once a year, without shirt or any other garment This was their winter dress, their summer apparel consists of a similar suit of jacket and trousers of coarsest cotton cloth Absence from work, or neglect of duty, was punished with stinted allowance, imprisonment, and flogging A medical man visited the plantation occasionally, and medicines were administered by a negro woman called the sick-nurse No instruction was allowed to be given in reading or writing, no games or recreation were provided, nor was there indeed any time to enjoy them if there were Their lot was one of continued toil, from morning till night, uncheered even by the *hope* of any change, or prospect of improvement in condition

"In appearance, all the negroes that we saw looked insufficiently fed, most wretchedly clad, and miserably accommodated in their dwellings, for though the exteriors of their cottages were neat and uniform, being all placed in regular order and whitewashed, yet nothing could be more dirty, gloomy, and wretched than the interiors, and we agreed that the criminals in all the state-prisons of the country, that we had yet seen, were much better off in food, raiment, and accommodation, and much less severely worked, than those men, whose only crime was that they were of a darker colour than the race that held them in bondage "

apologists, who were inconsistent in their attitudes toward the negro

the testimonies of the same persons differed very much, according to the turn which the conversation took. When they spoke of the coercion employed toward the negroes, and endeavoured to justify the necessity of it, they were represented as "an indolent, worthless, and ungrateful race, wholly incompetent to arouse themselves to voluntary labour by any adequate motive, and so ungrateful for favours received, that the better they were treated the worse they behaved." On the other hand, when it was lamented that they could not be elevated from their present condition it was replied that "they were already as happy as persons could be, that they were perfectly contented with their condition, and on the whole a much better race without education than with, as they were now faithful, kind-hearted, and attached to their masters, whereas education would destroy all their natural virtues, and make them as vicious as the lower orders in other countries."⁴⁴

The free black was always worse off than the slave. Extreme vigilance by a strong police force was necessary to keep the kindly negroes from rising against their masters. All discussion of abolition was suppressed. In Washington he heard it said that Shakespeare should have been lynched for writing *Othello*.

The East revealed to the traveller a rising industrialism, especially in New England and Pennsylvania. Everywhere there was an interest in labour-saving machines. In New York he saw the devices which featured the industrial fair. Boston showed him machines for kneading dough, for making boxes, for planing plank, and for cutting shingles. This last machine had the capacity of one thousand shingles an hour. And American hardware was as good as that manufactured in Birmingham.

In the opinion of many European travellers and social reformers, Lowell, Massachusetts, was one of the marvels of the world, "the American Manchester," where machinery and the factory system were to be seen at their best. The houses were neat, the streets were clean, the air was pure, and the factories, tidy as parlours, were better ventilated and more brightly lighted than any in England. The machines were artistically decorated with those scrolls, bright coloured landscapes, and cast-iron figures which the early nineteenth century mistook for art in industry. And, wonder of wonders, the washrooms for the employees, most of whom were rosy-faced, round-bosomed girls from the farms, were provided with wardrobes.

⁴⁴ *The Slave States* I, 87

and mirrors This attention to the physical welfare of the workers was quite in harmony with Buckingham's sentiments, as was also the care bestowed upon their moral life He applauded those rules which forbade the use of spirituous liquors and the playing of games of chance But he deplored the stolidity, the lack of artistic interest and appreciation, and the cold loves which featured the unimpassioned lives of what was on the whole, he thought, the best conducted and happiest body of workers in the world The temperance and orderliness of the community contributed to the making of the mill-owner's profits but added little to the cultural life of their employees

Lowell contrasted sharply with Pittsburgh to which Sheffield lost its title, "the city of soot" Quoting a Philadelphia preacher, Buckingham described the metropolis of Western Pennsylvania as looking like Sodom and Gomorrah on the day after the holocaust He passed over the town's morals in silence But in spite of the dirt he saw it as "the centre of a great manufacturing district" from which the whole nation might be supplied with wares He also predicted that Pennsylvania would become the future centre of American industrialism The only dark prospect was the probability that the state would fill up with the refuse population of Europe

The West was the promised land The flower-studded prairie, a vast sea of verdure, was "truly sublime", it reminded the ex-merchant captain of the ocean The prairie thunder-storms roared like "ten thousand pieces of the largest artillery all discharged at the same moment" And western sunsets were the most colourful in a land of beautiful sunsets But the present beauties of the West paled before its promise of future greatness The Mississippi moved the traveller to meditation

On the Nile, the Euphrates, the Tigris, and the Ganges it is the wreck of former grandeur that most engages attention and affects the feelings On this great river of America, it is the anticipations of the future that fill the mind and expand the heart⁴⁵

Illinois corn-lands yielded eighty bushels to the acre, and cattle fattened on the prairie grass If English legislators could only be made to see the evil of the Corn Laws, Western America would quickly become the granary of the world Some day "the great valley" would contain one hundred million people, and St Louis would be the largest city of the western world

⁴⁵ *The Eastern and Western States*, III, 179

Like many foreign travellers since, Buckingham selected the American woman as the object of his supreme admiration. She was not what the English knew as "the fine woman"—the tall and striking blonde—but she was pretty with symmetrical features, marbly white complexion, dark eyes and hair, and a small mouth. He deplored the fashionable slightness of figure and pale colouring which she cultivated by eating pickles, powdered chalk, vinegar, burnt pepper, and cinnamon instead of regular food. And this delicacy of physique was accompanied by a lack of animation and passion. New Orleans showed him females most to his liking, Creoles and quadroons, who were shortly to teach Walt Whitman the ways of love and the meaning of life. James Silk's sailor eyes saw in them the beautiful features of Mediterranean and Hindu women.

full dark liquid eyes, lips of coral and teeth of pearl, long raven locks of soft and glossy hair, sylph-like figures, and such beautifully-rounded limbs, and exquisite gait and manner, that they might furnish models for a Venus or a Hebe to the chisel of the sculptor.⁴⁶

In Buckingham's final judgment, America was a land of contrasts, where the good were better and the bad worse than in England. England had no cause to criticize, her task was to put her own house in order. She had as much blind party spirit and political corruption as her western offspring. The evils of industrialism were as black as those of slavery. The Bank of England had suspended specie payments for years, and repudiation of debts was an old English cry. England ought to look steadily at her own failings. But America ought not to fool herself. Her prosperity was the product not of sound policies but of the combination of rich natural resources and a small labour supply.

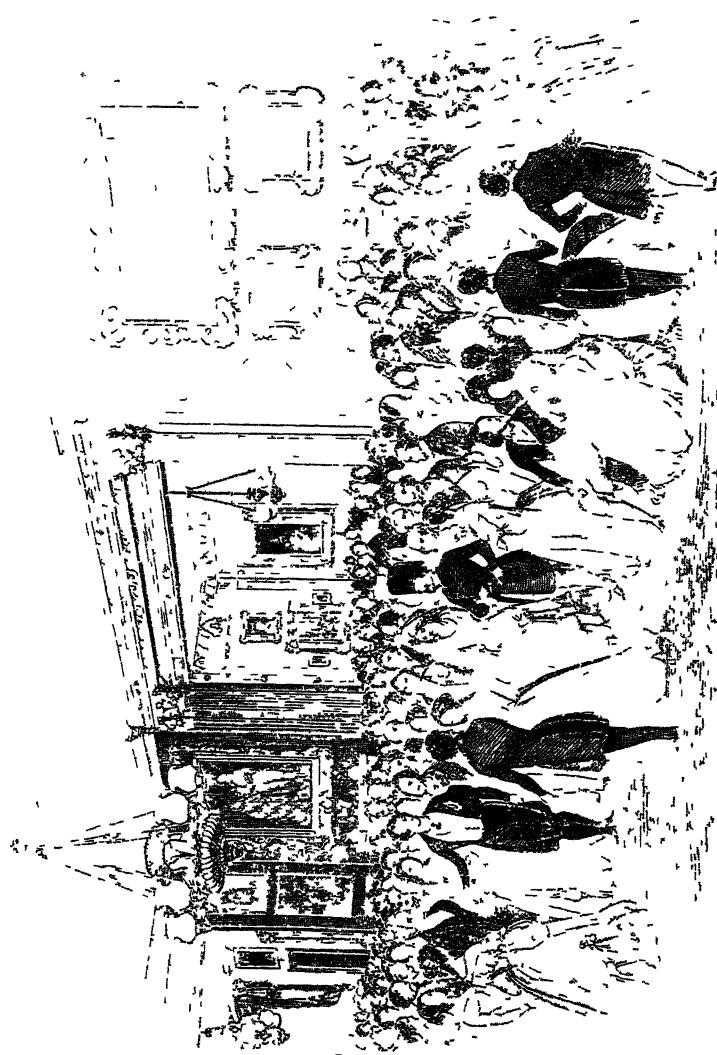
5 MIXED EMOTIONS

After the tour of Canada, James Silk returned to Boston and finally to New York, where he took passage for England on the steamship *President*. The wars between the Texans and Mexicans had caused him to give up the ambitious project of crossing the Pacific. He left America with mixed emotions. He had made money with ease—fifteen thousand dollars—but had lost it with greater ease. Investments in the Morris Canal Company of New York, the

⁴⁶ *The Slave States*, I, 358

Life and Trust Company of Baltimore, and the United States Bank of Philadelphia had turned out badly. The enterprises had gone bankrupt, and their securities were not even saleable. He was more depressed by these losses than by the greater ones in India. But the American ladies had not failed him. In Boston some of them united to give him a silver vase, as a symbol of their appreciation—"For His Efforts in Behalf of Seamen, and in the Cause of Humanity in India." And he was not without prospect in England, for Cobden had invited him to come home and help instruct the legislators of England in the evils of the Corn Laws.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ J. S. Buckingham, *Transactions of the British and Foreign Institute* (London, 1845), appendix, 482, British Museum Add. MSS., 35151, f. 272b



THE OPENING OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN INSTITUTE

Prince Albert is at the left centre of the group. Buckingham is immediately to his left.

[From *The Illustrated London News*, Feb 10, 1844]

CHAPTER VII

A PROPHET WITH SOME HONOUR

I THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN INSTITUTE

His Royal Highness Prince Albert arrived about nine o'clock, dressed in a black suit with a blue ribbon across a white waistcoat, the insignia of the Order of the Garter and the Order of the Golden Fleece added chivalric splendour to his sartorial perfection. Eight hundred notables, among whom were many brilliantly gowned and bejewelled women, and Mr Buckingham awaited his coming. As patron of the British and Foreign Institute His Royal Highness had graciously consented to attend its formal opening. Mr Buckingham, founder and resident director of the Institute, received him, and together they inspected the quarters which were designed to provide a London rendezvous for the artists, the littérateurs, and the intellectually élite of the world.

On the first floor was a library of three thousand volumes, a reading-room, where were to be found the leading domestic and foreign newspapers and periodicals, and a refreshment-room with blue damask hangings. On the second floor were three drawing-rooms. Two of these were decorated in crimson and gold and furnished in the Louis Quatorze style with crimson velvet ottomans and rich damask curtains, between them was an archway supported by Corinthian columns elaborately decorated with white and gold ornaments. The third room was lined with French tapestries and brown watered hangings. Rich and costly furnishings—chandeliers, pedestals, vases, velvet tables, carvings, and pier glasses, each notable for some novel and fancy design—filled the rooms. On the walls hung paintings by Raphael, Corregio, Guido, and Murillo, as well as canvases of contemporary English artists. The old masters were loaned for the occasion or the season. In the halls were busts of Lord Brougham, Lord Lyndhurst, Sir Walter Scott, the Duke of Wellington, and other worthies. And over all was an air of polite refinement which spoke eloquently of the resident director's superior tastes.

At the end of the inspection the royal guest expressed his satisfaction with the arrangements and joined the members in the

Louis Quatorze rooms to listen to a musical entertainment When he left shortly after ten o'clock, James Silk had passed the zenith of his social career¹

The British and Foreign Institute, like the voyage of the *Olve Branch*, had been projected about 1830, but it had not been organized until the return from America With the support of many well-known political and social figures, such as the Earl of Devon, who became permanent president of the Institute, the Duke of Cleveland, the Bishop of Durham, and Lord Brougham, Buckingham enrolled nearly a thousand members, offering to them, besides the ordinary advantages of a club, the polite society of refined females and association with those members of the foreign intelligentsia who might find in the Institute a cure for "London lonesomeness" In the prospectus of the Institute, which was installed at No 2 Hanover Square in London's fashionable West End, the founder made much of these unique features

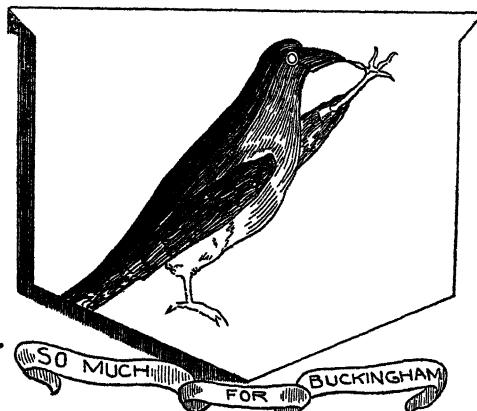
After the formal opening, February 2, 1844, the members were privileged to attend weekly soirées, held in the Louis Quatorze drawing-rooms On these occasions they might listen to a pale vocal artist or a none too vigorous violinist, they might absorb the erudition of a German or an American scholar, they might reflect upon a report of some recent scientific or archaeological discovery, or they might enjoy the easy fluency of the resident director, who reviewed new books, described far-away places, and expounded new proposals for social amelioration with equal and unsurpassed facility The Institute offered the best in refined taste and intellectual cultivation at a moderate price The resident director received only his keep but was assured attentive audiences, he had found a refuge for his old age

But Dame Fortune decreed otherwise and in the most absurd edicts When Buckingham issued tickets for the formal opening, he did not send any to certain literary figures whose humorous and satirical writings he thought unfit for the delicate atmosphere of the Institute Among those so slighted were Mark Lemon and Douglas Jerrold, who, in retaliation, turned their wit against the Institute and its founder, making *Punch* the organ of their animosity They dubbed the Institute "The British and Foreign Destitute"² They satirized the soirées

¹ *The London Illustrated News*, February 10, 1844

² Spencer T Hall, *op. cit.*, 206

A *sorée* was given here on Thursday, and an explanation was attempted of a design upon the walls by Mr Motley which was very satisfactory to the motley assemblage of visitors. Some one among the guests intimated privately that it would be as well, if while the designs were being explained, they could get some explanation of the designs of Mr Buckingham. Subsequently, Mr Buckingham gave a description of some great American lakes, and illustrated their depth by talking some unfathomable nonsense. Somebody then laid upon the table a piece of striped paper, which was said to be a plan of the Himalayah mountains. One of the visitors then produced a picolo flute, and played upon it for a few minutes, which had the effect of gradually clearing the room.³



And in mockery of the nobility, who gave their patronage to the Institute, the satirists heralded the knighting of Buckingham and illustrated his crest, "a cuckoo proper."⁴

The effect of this running attack, which was kept up for two years, was to drive away the members of the club. Buckingham answered the gibes in a pamphlet, *Slanders of Punch*, which, although it had a wide sale, was unequal to the task of damming the flood of abuse. Nor did the publication of the *Transactions of the British and Foreign Institute* in 1845 stem the tide. This volume was ornately printed and contained articles which *The London Times* and *The London Globe* commended.⁵ Both agreed, however, that Buckingham was vain and that his name appeared too frequently in the discussions, although *The Globe* softened its criticism by declaring that

³ *Punch*, VI (1844), 135

⁴ *Ibid.*, 150

⁵ *The London Times*, November 18, 1845, *The London Globe*, November 24, 1845

his personal character and literary reputation were firmly established. The decrease in membership continued, and in 1846 the Institute was closed and its effects disposed of. Spencer T. Hall recorded that it had been killed by "satire." No doubt Buckingham felt about *Punch* as did *The Christian Witness*, which in 1847 protested, "You lay aside religion when you pick up this sheet," and asked, "Are madmen now to become the mentors of the youth of England?"

2 MANCHESTER THE NEW INDUSTRIAL CIVILIZATION

But the mentors of the youth of England were neither madmen nor prophets nor buffoons, for out of *Babylon* had risen *Manchester*, where, to the consternation of many Christian witnesses, the education of the people was to be considerably advanced. "Can there be a doubt," asked *The Penny Magazine* in 1840, "of the vast influence which the triple connection [the alliance of steam with the press, the ship, and the railway] must exercise upon future destinies of mankind?"⁶ "The Great Society" was at hand—"an environment, which both in its world-wide extension and in its intimate connection with all sides of human existence is without precedent in the history of the world"—and it is pertinent to note that the British and Foreign Institute meant to function in its terms.

In 1837 the packets which ran from Falmouth to Lisbon were replaced by the vessels of the first ocean-going steamship line, now known as the *Peninsular and Oriental*. A year later a railroad from Manchester to London, *via* Birmingham, was opened. By 1848 *Blackwood's Magazine* was marvelling at "Modern Tourism" and holding up its hands in horror at "the female tourist." The cost of travel was only one-third of its former price, and eighty per cent of 1848's more than fifty million railroad passengers went third class. Inasmuch as a popular conundrum, which asked, "Why is a third class coach like Mr. Roebuck?" was answered, "Because it is open to both sides and represents Bath," one may conclude that the passengers were not pampered with comforts. As a matter of fact the third class coaches had been introduced only as a means of keeping the people from walking the tracks. Two years after the

⁶ *The Penny Magazine* (1840), 305.

⁷ Graham Wallas, *The Great Society* (New York, 1923), I.

close of the decade "we men of progress" were asked to envision "The Great Eastern, Euphrates, and Calcutta Railroad," which would make the journey from Calais to Calcutta a matter of a mere seven days

Meanwhile England had built her first telegraph line—Paddington to Slough—and in 1845, a year after its construction, the police used it to catch a criminal. A decade later a cable was laid across the Channel, and in 1858 the Atlantic was spanned. The first cable-gram announced to America that England and France, having secured indemnities and guarantees, had made peace with China. Steam printing presses scattered the news which the telegraph gathered. In the decade after the passage of the Reform Bill unstamped newspapers increased eighty per cent, Carlyle called them "the dancing dervishes" of publicity, and Lord John Russell complained that they made government impossible. In 1842, 2,149 new books were published, almost seven times the output of any year during Lord Eldon's anti-Jacobin crusade. Pamphlets were a deluge upon the land, by 1843 Cobden's Anti-Corn Law League had distributed ten million. And, after public opinion had forced Lord Melbourne's Government to yield to Rowland Hill's proposal for a penny post, letters increased from seventy-five million a year to almost three hundred million by 1847.

Within this nexus of interstimulation and interdependence "The Great Society" had focal points in the new industrial cities—Manchesters in fact. An inspection of the actual Manchester reveals that symbolical *Manchester* which was (and is) life for man under machine technology and capitalism.

"Ah, sir! in Manchester," said a master of a factory school, "everything depends upon the engine. Stop the engine, and you stop the wages, the dinners, the fees—you stop everything." William Cooke Taylor, in his *Tour of Lancashire*, a brilliant analysis of the new industrialism, saw steam as an impartial arbiter between all persons who worked in a mill. Emerson, the American philosopher, viewed the engine as a prospective member of Parliament, making laws for England, but he missed the point, for already it was enforcing fiats over the lives of men. "How slowly and deliberately the Leviathan works." "The people and the machinery keep time as perfectly as though the same engine moved them both." The engine had set up an "austere despotism."

The factory bell rang at five o'clock in the morning "Knockers-

up" went around waking up their clients, each of whom paid a penny a week for the service, and alarm clocks buzzed The standard gift to a newly wedded couple was a mechanical "knocker-up" The engines started at six o'clock, and in the strictly disciplined mills laggards were locked out or fined a couple of pence

Before the passage of the Ten Hour Act in 1847 the day was broken up into four working periods, from six to eight-thirty, from nine to one, from two to five-thirty, and from six to eight, or nine, or in some cases to ten o'clock in the evening During the work periods the rule of the engine was absolute Except for the din of the machinery there were no sounds, the workers seldom talked They touched levers, they watched wheels, they waited upon spindles and shuttles Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth thought that their labours resembled the torment of Sisyphus Even Cooke Taylor confessed that factory labour had a tendency to degrade the workers into automata, at the same time he argued that they were being taught the value of united action

Inside the mills there were the smell of oil and the iron discipline of the engine, outside the odours were miasmatic, and life was chaotic During those few hours of each day which the engine did not devour, the workers found time to endure miseries, to suffer deprivations, and to practise vices, whose nature and extent were (and still are) a never-ceasing issue between the advocates and opponents of the factory system It was commonly contended that these evils belonged to *the great town* (but the town belonged to the factory), perhaps a more correct view is that the evils belonged to man's ignorance and inhumanity, which were given new revelations in the industrial city

Ancoats was Manchester "*pur sang*" For the five-year period ending in 1845 the Ancoats death rate was one in thirty-two, the birth rate one in twenty-six Sixty per cent of those who died were not five years old, their average age was one year and five months. The average age of those who died after reaching the age of five was thirty-four Those who survived until they were twenty-one had a prospect of living until they were fifty-five All authorities agreed that the Manchester workers were sallow and stunted, even Queen Victoria recorded in her diary, after the visit of 1851, that both the men and women were "painfully unhealthy looking" Typhus, cholera, and influenza were more or less endemic in Ancoats and Angel Meadows, Chorlton was not quite so noisome A limp, a curved

spine, and flat feet were specific deformities among "the hands," from whom machinery took daily prey In the Infirmary, to which the victims of industrial accidents were brought, were to be seen feet torn off from legs, arms severed from bodies, hands literally crushed, and heads laid open to the brain Such cases not infrequently developed lockjaw The average age of death among the Manchester professional group was thirty-eight years, among tradesmen twenty, and among the operatives seventeen ⁸

The typical Ancoats dwelling consisted of two rooms, one above the other, a few had a back scullery Children clung about the threshold of the open doors, and the curious passer-by could get a glimpse of the interiors The rooms were seldom more than ten by eight feet, with floors of brick or stone The better kept rooms showed clean floors and plain but substantial furniture—a deal table, a few unpainted chairs, and a vast cupboard covered with jugs, pots, and an assortment of plates A clock with a painted face—the pride of the family—and a tea tray, emblazoned with all the colours of the rainbow, relieved somewhat the dull grey of the room Plain muslin curtains hung at the room's two windows, usually the upper window-frames were nailed shut in order to keep out the soot and dangerous night air Upon the window sills were pots containing withered plants, mute reminders of the traditions of the cottager, who, in spite of all his deprivations, had a warm attachment for his home But this attachment had disappeared in the great towns, where, with every land speculator a law unto himself, bad housing and over-crowding had become the rule, thus the urban population lost its feeling for "home," changing its domicile almost as often as it changed its clothes

The family slept in the upper room. Occasionally a bedstead might be found there, but more often a pile of straw and sacks served the purpose of a bed Strictly speaking sheets and blankets were unknown

In the late 'forties, after the half-day holiday movement began to make headway, the Saturday afternoons were devoted to cleaning up The men carried water, rolled up their sleeves, and helped the women scrub and polish It was a common complaint by observers

⁸ *Second Report of the Commissioners on the State of Large Towns and Populous Districts (1845) Appendix Part II, Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the Large Towns in Lancashire, by Dr Lyon Playfair, 1-73* This document gives a detailed account of the conditions in the various slums of Manchester.

that the younger girls knew nothing about housekeeping. Another interesting by-product of the shorter hours movement was an improvement in the dress of the women and girls, they had more time to spend on finery and more opportunity to display it before their males.

Saturday night was "calculating night" in Manchester, when the operatives made the most of their earnings. Together "the maester," holding the tightly wrapped baby, and the "missis," carrying the latchkey and a market basket, went forth to buy provisions and to enjoy the gaiety of London Road.

On Saturday night the street takes completely the aspect of a fair. The broad pavements are crammed with stalls, heaped with cheap edibles, animal and vegetable, with household matters, and with coarse articles of attire. Great streams of unprotected gas flicker over the booths, and similar pennons blaze at the door of every shop. The crowd is vast. All working Manchester seems to have assembled for the purpose of laying in its Sunday provisions, and the gabbling din of the universal chaffering mingles with the cries of the stall keepers, proclaiming the qualities of their goods, the shouts of the drivers of vehicles coming slowly through the crowds, and the laughing screams of bands of mill-girls calling out to each other and joking with their friends. You can hardly make your way into a shop, and the public houses, streaming with light, are literally choked with customers, while the swinging doors of the pawn-brokers have no moment of rest.⁹

Orange vendors, with baskets, were numerous, and every one ate the fruit. Quack doctors, jugglers, and sidewalk artists vied for the coppers of the crowd. Weighing machines, which dropped cards marked with height and weight, could be operated with a penny. Young couples—"sweethearts," as the phrase was— lingered about the shop windows. Pickpockets thrived.

The Apollo was Manchester's most magnificent saloon. One entered it from the street by a broad yet steep stair, a uniformed funkey at the door collected twopence, giving in return a ticket which entitled the holder to a serving of malt-liquor. The saloon was a long narrow room, flashily decorated with mirrors and gleaming crystal and filled with closely packed tables. The walls were covered with paper imitating polished wood. At the end of the room was a stage, upon which various entertainers appeared. The performances were a little primitive and coarse in style. Often a play which included characters such as a sanguinary tyrant, rightful and wrong heirs, and a stupid peasant and his sweetheart was the chief *pièce*.

⁹ *Littell's Living Age*, XXXVI (1853), 250.

de résistance of the evening The peasant asked riddles, danced hornpipes, and, with his sweetheart, sang an off-colour song about getting married At the end of the play a grim ghost arose in a flare of blue fire Ethiopian serenaders were popular, as were also patriotic numbers, like "The British Grenadier" and Dibdin's sea songs At the Apollo the orchestra consisted of two or three fiddlers and a pianist, its rival, the Casino, boasted of a mechanical organ On its stage were to be seen *poses plastique* The crowds which swarmed in these places were mainly operatives of both sexes Often "the missis" met "the maester" at one of them after her shopping tour The crowds were orderly, good humoured, and talkative

In the opinion of *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, the problem of giving innocent amusements to the people was more important than any other problem of the day, something to enable the workers to transcend the ordinary series of images and ideas and to lose themselves in illusion was "the grand want of the work people "¹⁰ It was just this illusion which liquor supplied, now "the movies" do it more effectively Another attraction of the public houses was the newspapers which could be read there Peep shows and filthy anatomical museums caught the lewdly curious Manchester was "the paradise of bettors", cheap Yankee clocks, made of wood, were imported as prizes for raffles Prize-fighting attracted only a few, for athletic sports had almost disappeared Until 1846, when public parks were opened in Salford and Manchester, the only walks available to the people were over two miles from the main part of the town But the favourite Sunday diversion was "botanizing," another vestige of the cottager's love of nature

The subscription libraries and the Mechanics' Institute, where clerks and engineers studied, were beyond the means of the factory workers In 1838 the Ancoats Lyceum, located in the basement of a Methodist chapel, was opened, it aimed to bring to the slum the opportunity for a meagre education Forty per cent of the population was illiterate *The British Banner* estimated that there were ten thousand women in Manchester who never attended church after their marriage Both infidelity and socialism had made great progress among the operatives, but the books to be found in their houses were usually on religious subjects At any rate the dissenters and new religious sects, like the Mormons, had many more adherents among the workers than did the Established Church.

¹⁰ *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, XVIII (1852), 95

Vulgar tales, legends, cheap essays of a democratic or atheistic tendency, penny novels, comic songs, recitation books, dream-books, and sermons were popular among those who could read Abel Heywood, a Manchester newsdealer who was convicted in 1840 for selling blasphemous works, estimated that during 1849 he sold weekly six thousand each of titles such as *Elmira's Curse*, *Ella the Outcast*, *Gallant Tom*, *Gambler's Wife*, and *String of Pearls*. Other popular novels bore the titles of *Bertrand the Brutal*, or *the Bloody Bandit of the Black Forest*, *Selina the Sanguinary*, or *Love and Devotion*, and *Dutiful Dora*, or *a Father's Curse and a Husband's Love*. The general content of these books was "a monstrous combination of improbabilities in narrative and characters, seasoned up with murder or a hanging every few pages or with a scene of coarse licentiousness." Women, in particular, were fond of "mixed love and raw-head-and-bloody-bones stories." Cheap periodicals also found a large public. Over half the total circulation of *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal* was in Lancashire. *Barker's People*, an American paper, reached some twenty thousand readers weekly in the same area. Only a few of the men argued the weighty issues of politics and the heavier propositions of political economy.

After the passage of the Ten Hour Act the demand for copy books increased rapidly, and the cheap theatres, exhibition booths, and music halls received a much greater patronage. At the same time mass-singing became popular, and cheap pianos began to be manufactured for "the millions." The growth of musical education among the industrial masses was one of the notable cultural phenomena of the 'forties.

Working-class Manchester had one holiday—Whit Week. Then mothers, in greasy shawls and linsey-woolsey petticoats, bedecked their children in ribbons and bonnets to march in the parade of Sunday School scholars. Those children whose parents were too poor to outfit them for the occasion huddled together in doorways to watch their more fortunate comrades. The temperance societies held festivals. The friendly societies or lodges, which made Manchester their great centre, gathered in conventions. Railroad excursions carried parties into the country for a day with nature, some groups even went to the sea-shore. Horse-racing, with its chances for winning, added its own tang to the excitement, the rougher elements frequented the tracks. Whit Week was the one exciting lull in the year's dull routine of labour and bare existence.

Just as the engine imposed its movement upon the operative's day, so did society, organized around the engine, beat a rhythm in his life. Until he was eight years old he "fROLlicked upon the hilltops," while his parents worked in the mill. At eight he was enrolled as "a short timer," tending a mule or a loom in the morning and going to a factory school in the afternoon. When he was thirteen he "passed the doctor," becoming "a full timer" at four or five shillings a week. In two or three years he was sufficiently skilful to watch a pair of looms and his wages were doubled. At twenty-one he was an expert, then he married, but his young wife kept on working, and together they made a pound and a half or a little more a week. Their earnings were now at the maximum and their burden the lightest, with the birth of each child the burden became heavier. For fifteen years, until the eldest child became a full timer, the family experienced a progressive impoverishment, after thirty-five the operative and his family, as one by one the children went into the mill, enjoyed a return of prosperity. But as the children married, thus continuing their own movement through the cycle, "the old folks" sunk into poverty, finally living with some grateful child or going to the poor-house. Whether he worked in the cotton mill or in another of the innumerable factories which made Manchester the industrial capital of the world, the operative's life followed this general rhythm, and he did not have one chance in fifty of rising above his original status.¹¹

Beside the operatives Manchester knew capitalists—in their own phrase, "Manchester men," in the words of the people, "millocrats," and in the eyes of the country, "cotton lords"—and the two classes were "too widely separated from each other in habits, tastes, manners, modes of thought, and ways of living" to understand each other. The old proverb, "One half of the world does not know how the other half lives," had been improved so that it read, "One half of the world *does not care* how the other half lives." An Anglican prelate argued that Manchester was the most aristocratic town in the kingdom, and at least one "millocrat" fortified his suburban mansion with cannon. Daily "the man of business" drove in his fly or rode in an omnibus from his suburban villa to his factory or the Exchange. He spent "the fifth quarter" of his day in dining, visiting, or playing, perhaps, at the golf club, which had been organized as early as 1815.

On Tuesday at noon "the parliament of the lords of cotton".

¹¹ *The Fortnightly Review*, X (1868), 430 *et seq.*

assembled and enacted laws "as immutable as those of the Medes and the Persians"

In the magnificent pillared hall move, almost like so many phantoms, a crowd of keen, anxious-looking men, portly, sixteen stone personages, with rosy cheeks, but with none of the vacant, aldermanic look about them, sallow Yankees, tall and lank, with oddly shaped hats, and particularly well got-up about the boots, bustling agents, full of civility, and eager to do a bargain, and sharp Exchange clerks, who come to represent their employers' houses The taciturnity of the crowd at first strikes you You hear no vacant gossiping, no laughing, no loud talking whatever, yet an electric stream of intelligence seems to pervade the whole assembly, and every one, by a look, a gesture, perhaps with a muttered word or two, appears to make himself fully understood Now what does all the whispering, and nodding, and winking mean? Why don't they speak out? Why, because they are doing business—sounding each other, bargaining with each other, to an amount of money that would appear fabulous Hundreds of thousands of pounds change hands in these broken words and unfinished sentences A cotton sale is soon effected You may catch the word, "Brand," "*Ex Mary Jane*," "Bales," "Three thousand pounds," "Eh?" "Yes," "Well-done", and the agreement is concluded On 'Change, then, a Manchester merchant is a perfectly adjusted machine ¹²

On the other days of the week business was pursued with no less concentration but with different techniques As soon as a stranger appeared in High Street, a "hooker in" accosted him, asking questions and offering suggestions, and seldom, if ever, did any one escape being "hooked" These street agents bore such meaningful names as "Plague," "Pestilence," "Sudden Death," and "Murder" as testimonials to the thoroughness with which they brought in prospective customers

The "Manchester man" would undertake to supply all the markets from Lima to Pekin and be exceedingly vexed if he missed a single village that might have purchased a hank of yarn Moreover, he worked with dispatch By the 'forties it was possible to ship raw cotton from Liverpool to Manchester in the morning and return it in the evening a finished product Even more remarkable was the fulness of knowledge which featured the "Manchester man's" calculations He watched mercantile and political fluctuations all over the world, not failing to note even the affairs of a small South American state or of a minor German province that might affect the sale of a single bolt of calico "The Great Society" was his field of action

As a cultural type the "Manchester man" was Matthew Arnold's

¹² *Littell's Living Age*, XXXVI (1853), 254

Philistine, he bought art objects for the parlour but lived in the kitchen He was charitable, spending as much money on foundations of one kind or another as for his own luxuries, but he had more sympathy with New Zealand colonists than with the denizens of Ancoats The bazaar and the masque ball were favourite methods of raising money He was flattered when Mehemet Ali's son visited his factory to see the marvel of cotton manufacture He provided Samuel Smiles with examples for *Self Help*, the vulgate version of Benthamism He read the golden rule, "Ever remember, my dear Dan, that you should look forward to being some day the manager of that concern" Emerson credited him with a belief in four things —Shakespeare's genius, commerce, pit-coal, and the steam engine Another contemporary observer described him as "a literal, practical, prosaic being"

He does not know the meaning of the term abstraction, he views everything in the concrete He has no idealities, historical associations are unintelligible to him His figures are not imaginative, but arithmetical He reduces everything to sight and touch . ¹³

To paraphrase a recent author, the law of supply and demand was his gospel, the locomotive his fetish, and Manchester his Holy City

And this Holy City, according to Faucher, a friendly French critic, was nothing less than "the Utopia of Bentham" The head was more important than the hand The beautiful, the noble, and the great were referred to the standard of utility Thought and work were inseparable Vague tradition and casual experiment had given way to science, which was no longer a luxury but a necessity On the other hand money was "the universal leverage of society" To lack money was to want honour, love, obedience, and friends, to want respect and sympathy, and the ordinary courtesies of society, besides, occasionally, victuals Emerson saw all England as "false and forged," "a reaction to the larger machinery of commerce," and Manchester in particular was "a civility of trifles, of money and expense, an erudition of sensations" But Carlyle, declaring that spinning cloth for the poor was holy work, offered hope for the future, "Manchester once organic will bless and not afflict"

Unfortunately Manchester was already organic, with a rhythmic life of its own What later-day academicians have called "the business cycle" early made its phases integral parts of Manchester's being After the boom always came the crisis

¹³ *Fraser's Magazine*, XLVII (1853), 617

The warning signs of the commercial hurricane manifest themselves first in the relation of credit. The banks restrict their circulation and decrease their discount rebates. The manufacturers reduce the hours of work or close their mills. The tradesmen, losing their consumers or obliged to sell on credit, become bankrupt. The workers, no longer having work, use up their poor savings, borrow on pawned articles, and end by falling into the custody of public charity. The poor tax is doubled and tripled at the moment wealth becomes scarce. The workers who had emigrated from rural districts are relentlessly sent back to their parishes. In order to make up for the insufficiency of official help, they open subscriptions everywhere, and missionaries of charity penetrate into the most miserable by-places in order to carry there with the alms some words of consolation. The manufacturers assemble in the towns and investigate the evil. The workers, famished and desperate, are stirred to the point of mutiny. Petitions rain into the House of Commons, and motions follow one another, parliament orders inquiries, the queen asks for the prayers of the clergy.¹⁴

Distress was indigenous in the manufacturing districts. Since the Shudehill fight of 1757 Manchester had been familiar with food riots, the soup kitchen made its appearance in 1799. But during a business crisis the operatives were plunged into the worst of privations. Then the butcher shops closed because the people could not buy even the poorest cuts of meat, and, when the people no longer possessed furniture or spare clothing, the pawnshops shut their doors. In neither the hovels of Ireland nor the wynds of Glasgow did Cooke Taylor see such agonizing misery as in Lancashire, by way of explaining the extreme distress he quoted an operative, "Every improved faculty of mind is strength of muscle to help us forward when times are prosperous, but in such seasons [1842] each improved faculty is a new raw on which the whip descends more painfully and bitterly." This periodic intensification of misery, despite an unprecedented power of production, was a fantastic element in that re-education of the people wrought by the industrial city. Buckingham argued that the anxiety of mind caused by these "whirlwinds," as he called the crises, not only disturbed working-class life but hung as a shadow over all society.

The events of 1842 also revealed the clash of interests which is organic in "The Great Society." The campaign of the cotton lords against the landlord's corn monopoly was gathering the strength that was to carry it to victory four years later. In January a Manchester bazaar netted nine thousand pounds for the cause. During

¹⁴ Léon Faucher, *Études sur l'Angleterre* (Paris, 1845), I, 453-454.

the early summer thirteen hundred Lancashire firms petitioned for Corn Law repeal, a petition bearing the names of seventy-five thousand women was also laid before the Commons. Meanwhile, when Parliament adjourned without having heard either the demands of the capitalists or the cries of the destitute workers, the capitalists, in order to protect declining profits, invoked their economic power and reduced wages. The workers met these reductions with strikes and turn-outs, which, for spontaneous mass-action, surpassed all previous manifestations of discontent. The antagonism between the Chartists and the Anti-Corn Law League added something to the feeling which animated the workers, but on the whole the August strike of 1842 was an impromptu demonstration by the industrial masses. *The Manchester Guardian* described it as "an insurrection."¹⁵

The disturbance began among the employees of the Staffordshire ironfounders and spread throughout the industrial regions, even to the shipbuilding district of the Tyne and the mining area around Glasgow. In Staffordshire posters and placards called to "the toiling slaves," "Union is strength . . . Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen." The climax came in Manchester during the second week of August. Trouble became imminent when Feargus O'Connor, the Chartist leader, arrived to lay the corner-stone of a monument to "Orator" Hunt in an Ancoats churchyard, the actual outbreak was precipitated by the announcement of a reduction of the wages of the Staleybridge weavers.

The weavers armed themselves with bludgeons and marched from mill to mill driving out other workers and stopping the machinery by taking out boiler-plugs. The strikers stated their case in resolutions which condemned the avarice of the mill-owners, demanded the repeal of all class legislation, and called for "a fair day's wage for a fair day's work." They raided the gas works. They stopped trains. They stripped the clothes off policemen and threw the garments into the Irwell. They demolished shops and seized food. They organized great begging parties and went from door to door demanding bread and money. The mobs were composed of as many women and boys as men, most of whom possessed no weapons except what the authorities called "sharp stones."

The authorities were helpless, for the police were intimidated and the available military detachment could not cope with the mobs.

¹⁵ See *The Manchester Guardian* for August 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, and 18, 1842.

In fact the cavalry rode from place to place rescuing the police. Under these circumstances the town council adopted resolutions against the strikers and ordered the Riot Act read "The respectable people" organized slowly. At first "young gentlemen" acted as scouts, riding about observing the crowds. Then great numbers of special constables were sworn in. The mayor appealed to all "good citizens" to join the forces of law and order, and the council called upon the Home Office for military aid. Peel, after a hurried meeting of all the members of the Cabinet then in London, ordered detachments of the Horse Guards and the Royal Artillery to Manchester. When they marched from Charing Cross to Euston Station by way of Regent Street, as a display of force to London, crowds lined the streets, jeering, hissing, and shouting, "Remember you are brothers." The arrival of the military broke the strike, except for incidental local disturbances, the workers returned to the factories at lowered wages, but there hung over England a fear of revolution which did not lift until the Chartist fiasco of 1848.

Cooke Taylor saw in the factory hands a "NEW" population, which at no distant time would "bear all society upon its bosom", "there are," he said, "mighty energies slumbering in those masses." But Peel, in reporting the August outbreak to the Queen, assured her that it had no social cause.

3. THE REFORMING 'FORTIES

Buckingham's return from America was a cause for rejoicing in London temperance circles, and on December 21, 1840, Exeter Hall—

Its front unassuming, straight, formal, and square,
Within it is spacious, and lofty, and fair
The large-hearted, cold-visaged men who meet there
Well typify Exeter Hall
Narrow-browed—gloomy—and frowning on all,
A most orthodox building is Exeter Hall—¹⁸

resounded to a welcome given him by the New British and Foreign Temperance Society, a descendant of the British Teetotal Temperance Society. In 1836 when the most influential members of the older British and Foreign Temperance Society joined the new organization, it circulated both the long and the short pledge and adopted the name, The New British and Foreign Society for the

¹⁸ *Pasquin*, 1850, No 6, 52

Suppression of Intemperance Although Earl Stanhope, at Buckingham's suggestion, was made president, the latter served as the functional head. But discord between the teetotallers and the moderationists quickly broke out. In 1837 the former won control by a large majority and changed the name to the New British and Foreign Temperance Society. Later developments led to the secession of the moderationists and the revival of the Society for the Suppression of Intemperance. While Buckingham was in America several efforts to reunite the societies failed. During 1841 he entered actively into the work of amalgamating the societies regardless of pledges, and in 1842, after the creation of the Metropolitan Total Abstinence Society, the older organizations, which were heavily in debt, were merged in the National Temperance Society. Buckingham became one of its seventeen vice-presidents, and on January 23, 1843, it held an inaugural public meeting under his and Samuel Bowly's leadership. It adopted the long pledge, and Earl Stanhope refused to become a member.¹⁷

This reconstitution of the major temperance societies was only an incidental phase of the organization for reform which filled the decade of the 'forties. Associations of one kind or another multiplied without end, agitation, investigation, and legislation became the watchwords of the day. Invention and science supported reform. Rubber elastic cloth brought the introduction of "a rational corset." Liebig's work on agricultural chemistry was quoted in support of vegetarianism. There was a beard movement, a bloomer movement, and an anti-tobacco movement.

The doctor leans back on his old settee,
 A smoking a rank cigar,
 And grins a grin, for so pleased is he
 Whilst puffing the smoke afar,
 And he puffs and puffs, and he snuffs and snuffs
 Like a man with a bad catarrh
 His boon companion beside him sits,
 And a stale old quid he chaws,
 And a plug of the weed that he bites into bits
 He holds in his precious paws,
 And he sits and sits, and squirts and spits,
 The slime from his juicy jaws.¹⁸

¹⁷ Samuel Couling, *History of the Temperance Movement in Great Britain and Ireland, from the earliest date to the present time. With Biographical Notices of Departed Temperance Worthies* (London, 1862), 83 *et seq.*, 157 *et seq.*

¹⁸ *The Progressionist* 1854, 176.

Smoking was not permitted in the British and Foreign Institute Even English cooking, that most conservative element in the nation's traditional culture, underwent some improvement Along with industrialism the reforming tendencies of the late eighteenth century had matured, and, as many contended, the unprecedented technological advances supported the faith in the possibility of a similar social change In Buckingham's phrase, social reforms were "not looming in the distance but nigh at hand"

To the discussion of those issues about which the sharpest political controversies centred the "Liberal Reformer" made characteristic contributions During 1841 and 1842 he appeared throughout Yorkshire as a lecturer for the Anti-Corn Law League His former constituents in Sheffield received him with enthusiasm, and *The Iris* declared that his argument was enough to convince any one of the justice of free trade At York he concluded his speech with some verses which he had composed while waiting for a train

If God's free bounty bids this globe produce
 More than enough for all his creatures' use,
 Shall man monopolize the rich supply,
 See brutes full fed—while fellow mortal die?
 Forbid it, heaven! while earth's prolific fields
 For man and beast alike abundance yields
 Free as the winds, and chainless as the sea,
 Should intercourse between all nations be,
 Wherever land is found, or ocean roll,
 Or man exists—from Indus to the Pole
 Then would unfettered Industry be paid
 In the rich wealth its own free hands had made
 Then would mankind fulfil Heaven's first decree,
 And earth with "fruitfulness" replenished be
 Then would War's blood-red banner soon be furled,
 And Peace triumphant reign throughout the world
 While freighted fleets would traverse every sea,
 And Commerce wing her way, unchecked and free,
 Island be linked to island—main to main—
 Binding all Nature fast in Love's harmonious chain ¹⁹

Occasionally he was heckled by Chartists, who objected to setting aside the adoption of the Charter in favour of the repeal of the Corn Laws Usually he wrung from such opponents the admission that

¹⁹ J S Buckingham, *Evils and Remedies of the Present System of Popular Elections, with a sketch of the Qualifications and Duties of Representatives and Constituents, and an Address on the Proposed Reforms in the Commerce and Finance of the Country* (London, 1841), 267

the removal of the duties was desirable, at the same time informing them that he agreed with the main points of the Charter. Instead of the existing property qualification, which he looked upon as meaningless, or full manhood suffrage as demanded by the Chartists, he urged an educational qualification. He would have required each voter to pass a test which consisted of reading from any standard history of England and of working four problems involving the addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication of numbers in the billions. At elections the right of a person to vote would be established by writing his signature in duplicate of one entered in a registration book. Every seven years a revision of the voting list would be carried out on the basis of new tests. Buckingham argued that an educational test placed the suffrage within the reach of every man who really desired it and that education meant something in terms of political intelligence. He would have given the vote to all women who qualified, for they had, he said, as just a claim to it as a man could possibly have. He accepted the other five points of the Charter and praised the masses for taking the lead in demanding a change in a political arrangement which was seen to be defective as early as 1834.²⁰

In proposing such a qualification for the suffrage Buckingham touched upon the sore problem of national education. The movements for educational reform, which had been at work since the last decades of the eighteenth century, had accomplished little, the Sunday Schools, in particular, had proved unequal to the task of educating the poor. One observer reported that children after attending a Baptist school for five years were unable to spell *horse* or *cow*, pupils in a Calvinist school could not spell *house* or *church*, and pupils in a Methodist school could read *a-b*, *ab*, but could not tell the meaning of *d-o-g*. More than any other factor, however, religious prejudices frustrated the movement to create a national system of schools.²¹

²⁰ *Evils and Remedies* . . . , 20 *et seq.*, J. S. Buckingham, *The Coming Era of Practical Reform* not "looming in the distance" but "nigh at hand" *A new series of Tracts addressed to the Public and the Parliament of 1854* (London, 1853), 97 *et seq.*

²¹ The satirists had great fun with the proposals put forward for improving the schools. *Punch* reported a new method for teaching history, such as singing the following lines to the tune of "Yankee Doodle":

In England first the Briton dwelt,
The Saxon next did follow,
But conquering Will did Harold welt,
And beat the Saxons hollow.

Replying to the sectarians Buckingham declared that religion was a matter of conduct and conscience and argued that the best way to teach it was by the example of parents and masters He advocated a system of state-supported secular education similar to that proposed by the Radicals in 1834 He asked for the introduction of gymnastics into the curriculum, citing the Persians as examples of the benefits of exercises and bathing All subjects but writing, drawing, and chemistry, which required special rooms, should be taught by studying "the face of nature" Half of education, he contended, had always been the study of words, which he deplored as a waste of time In the infant schools children between the ages of two and seven were to be taught to love the beautiful and the good, between the ages of seven and fourteen they were to acquire a broad factual knowledge of science, history, and literature Bright students might finish these studies more quickly than others and thus begin at an earlier age some professional training ²²

To his former ideal of education as a basis of an informed citizenship Buckingham now added the conception of education as a source of personal culture The uneducated man was cut off from art, science, and history, his mind was a vacuum of ignorance but filled nevertheless with degrading appetites and debasing excitements The first obligation of a nation was to educate its children, and the foremost duty of a parent was to exalt the teacher of his offspring

In the late summer of 1842 Buckingham visited South Ireland, where he found the well-to-do Irish papering their parlours with designs showing thousands taking the pledge before Father Mathew, the Capuchin monk whose success in the advocacy of total abstinence was the feature of the temperance crusade during the late 'thirties and early 'forties He had been induced to take up the work by a Quaker, William Martin, and had the support of the Evangelical Churches and temperance societies throughout his endeavours He visited Scotland in 1842, a year later he came to England When he appeared in London under the auspices of the National Temperance Society, Buckingham presided at his opening meeting Ten thousand people gathered in a field on the Commercial Road to hear him, and among those who took the pledge was Buckingham's youngest son, Leicester Silk In the course of a week twenty thousand persons swore to abstain from the use of alcohol ²³

²² *The Coming Era of Practical Reform*, 307 *et seq*

²³ *National Temperance Advocate and Herald*, September 7, 1843

As part of its work the National Temperance Society supported a visiting service to the homes of drunkards' families. In 1846 its agents made 32,982 such calls and learned some things about the people. Of the persons visited 8,199 could not read, 5,333 had no place of worship, and 1,898 did not possess a Bible. Seven hundred and thirty-eight drunkards signed the pledge. In the same year visits were paid to one hundred and eight vessels, and twenty-seven crews were induced to adopt the principle of total abstinence.²⁴

The most spectacular event brought about by the National Temperance Society was the World Temperance Convention of August, 1846. The representatives of 460 temperance societies, mostly British, gathered in London for a three-day session of speeches and reports, 31 delegates came from America. At the concluding meeting, held in Covent Garden, Reverend Lyman Beecher, the great American temperance preacher, replied to a speech of welcome and informed the gathering that "the Holy Ghost would never regenerate a man as long as he was dealing in his cups." A Professor Caldwell from Dickinson College, Pennsylvania, declared that the temperance cause had not been so triumphant in his state as in other parts of America, but, like the English at Waterloo, the temperance advocates were too stupid to know when they were beaten. Frederick Douglass, the negro anti-slavery orator, was received with cheers. He told how in 1842 the Anglo-Saxons of Philadelphia had thrown brick-bats at a negro temperance procession and asked his hearers to help rescue his black brothers from the pit of slavery. Reverend E. N. Kirk of Boston urged the great importance of training the children in the habits of temperance. Buckingham concluded the programme with an attack upon the British authorities for directing their energies against the cholera, when liquor was far more destructive.²⁵

In the earlier sessions Buckingham urged a better organization of the temperance campaign. He reminded the representatives that "the cause" was in its infancy and that its first effort must be to secure more correct statistics. It was easy, he declared, to say that one half of the crime, three-fourths of the poverty, and five-ninths of all misery were caused by drink, but, since the great aim of the drive against liquor was not merely to talk, he wanted to be able to

²⁴ *The People's Journal*, III (1847), Annals of Progress, 45.

²⁵ *The Bristol Temperance Herald*, September, 1846.

cite "chapter and verse" He supported Edward C Delavan, whose letter he read to the Convention, in proposing the organization of a world temperance union, but, although they realized that the steam engine had brought the nations into closer communication, the delegates were not ready to take such a step In the interests of harmony he opposed the effort of the teetotalers to put the Convention on record in favour of the long pledge The Convention expressed its convictions by adopting resolutions which declared alcohol a subtle poison, recommended total abstinence as the correct temperance principle, and asked that all licenses for the manufacture of intoxicants should be revoked Speaking on these resolutions Buckingham satirized the brewers who acted, he said, on the theory, "I can see nobody, therefore nobody can see me"²⁶

The People's Journal declared that before the glories of the Convention the glories of Waterloo and Trafalgar sank into oblivion But *The Athenaeum*, which sneered at "the so-called World Convention," reflected the general attitude of the press

Instead of organizing an international union the Convention authorized an appeal to the rulers of the great Governments of the earth, and Buckingham was charged with drawing up the plea

O rulers and potentates of the earth! we entreat you, in the name of the World's Convention, now assembled together in friendly union from the varied countries that have sent us here to represent their feelings, hopes, and desires, that you unite with us in doing whatever in your wisdom may seem best calculated to arrest the progress of intemperance in your respective dominions—to encourage all societies, institutions, and measures for abolishing the drinking usages and customs of your people—to honour by your august presence, as well as patronage (as their Majesties the King and Queen of Sweden have recently done, attending in their royal persons the great Temperance Convention at Stockholm, held in that city during the last month only), similar gatherings together, for the same purpose, of the subjects of your realms, and while you will thus draw down upon your crowned and anointed heads the blessings of all your people, and the grateful homage of the hearts from millions yet unborn, your dying moments, whenever they may come—as in the course of time must happen to us all—will be soothed with the remembrance that you have endeavoured to discharge the high trust and responsibility committed to your rule, by encouraging within your dominions a new moral reformation for

²⁶ *The Proceedings of the World's Temperance Convention* (London, 1846), *passim*.



THE WORLD'S TEMPERANCE CONVENTION, LONDON, 1846

The central figure is G. W. Alexander, Chairman of the Convention. Immediately to his right, standing, is Rev. Lyman Beecher, the famous American preacher. Buxingham is at the extreme lower right corner of the picture.
[From *The Illustrated London News*, Aug 15, 1846]

the improvement of mankind—the great end and aim of which is to promote "Glory to God, on earth peace, and good-will to man!"

In the name and under the authority of the convention, London,
August 10, 1846

(signed,) J S BUCKINGHAM ²⁷

As Buckingham pointed out there was a close connection between the temperance and the peace movements, the same persons figured in each. And the years which brought the temperance movement to an international status witnessed an intensification of the agitation for the organization of peace upon an institutional basis rather than in terms of diplomatic expediency. The immediate occasion of the agitation was the Oregon question. In 1845 Joseph Crosfield of Manchester suggested that the members of families having branches in America as well as in England should write to each other, he addressed his appeal to the merchants of Lancashire. A group of the leading peace advocates which included Cobden, Bright, Sturge, Clarkson, Bowring, and Buckingham then recommended the general sending of "Friendly Addresses" to Americans ²⁸. A notable example of this friendly practice was an address by sixteen hundred women of Exeter to the women of Philadelphia. Elihu Burritt, the successor to William Ladd as the chief American peace advocate, co-operated with the English leaders. He estimated that over eight hundred American newspapers printed these good-will communications.

Burritt's visit to England and the organization of the League of Universal Brotherhood were only significant incidents in the general peace campaign. In 1847 Buckingham, Burritt, and several others spoke at the thirty-seventh anniversary of the founding of the London Peace Society. Its report announced that during the preceding twelve months five hundred lectures had been delivered to audiences totalling over one hundred thousand and five hundred thousand tracts had been distributed. The newspapers called the peace men impudent for clamouring so loudly after thirty years of peace, but they met each warlike move with a counterstroke. *The Herald of Peace*, recalling the patriotic plea for the right of defensive war, greeted the news of the outbreak of war in the Punjab with the curt question, "Are you willing to take *this war* as a specimen of that for which you plead?" *The Herald* also asked,

²⁷ Quoted in Daniel Dorchester, *The Liquor Problem in All Ages* (New York, 1884), 330-331.

²⁸ *The People's Journal*, I (1846) 346.

"What proof do the results of these three days' engagements afford that the British army had the sanction of the Almighty for its proceedings?" and "Is the whole British nation to become a nation of soldiers in order to keep possession of India?"²⁹

One night in March, 1846, when the Tower guns in London boomed the announcement of a victory in India, Buckingham was inspired to write a poem, *The Horrors of War*. A stanza spoke the conviction that repudiated the traditional glories of war

To feed the hungry—clothe the weak—
Comfort the mourner—free the slave—
Instruct the ignorant—help the weak—
Are these not worthy of the brave?³⁰

He set forth this repudiation in even sharper words

If bravery and contempt of death, if utter disregard for the lives of others, if pleasure in deeds of blood and slaughter be virtues—the savage Indian, the barbarous Kafir, and the New Zealand cannibal possess these virtues in as great a degree as the highest admiral of England or the ablest general of France. Nay, the tiger, the lion, the wolf, and the hyena are our equals in this lowest of all animal propensities—courage, combativeness, and vengeance.³¹

Later in the same year, when travelling on the continent, he delivered a peace lecture in Paris

In France, above all other countries on earth, war has been honoured as though it were the chief end and aim of the Creator, in giving birth to his creatures, that they should study the art of ingeniously and skilfully destroying each other. In no country more than in France have warriors been elevated into demi-gods, placed in the highest seats whilst living, and their cold and lifeless remains almost idolized while dead.³²

A book describing this continental tour gave many details showing how military habits had penetrated the life of the various nations, its preface contained a plea for the organization of a Congress of Nations.³³ During a subsequent tour in Germany, a visit to Spires caused him to recount Louis XIV's wanton destruction of the city

²⁹ *The Herald of Peace*, V (1846), 50

³⁰ J S Buckingham, *An Earnest Plea for the Reign of Temperance and Peace* (London, 1851), 125

³¹ *The Herald of Peace*, V (1846), 233

³² J S Buckingham, *Tour in France, Piedmont, Lombardy the Tyrol, and Bavaria* (2 vols., London, 1848), preface, xv.

³³ *Ibid.*, 23

and to comment, "It is impossible not to be struck with the needless and unprovoked atrocities which the French have committed upon cities containing innocent and defenceless people, the old, the sick, and infirm, and thousands of women and children, " ³⁴ He did not forget, however, that England had also sinned and was still sinning. When a subscription was raised to erect a "Memorial to this Peace-proclaiming Exposition of 1851," he protested that the setting up of a statue of Richard Cœur de Lion was an expression of militaristic spirit He described Richard as "a man characterized by the three great vices 'pride, avarice, and voluptuousness' and whose life was a career of blood and murder " ³⁵ As the proper method of combating militarism, Buckingham advocated "passive resistance " ³⁶

The outbreak of the American war with Mexico called out much sharp comment Brontérre O'Brien's revolutionary *National Reformer* exclaimed

The distinction between a line of capitalists and a line of generals is a distinction without a difference Destroy the king and the priest —the lawyer and the soldier—the journalist and the gens d'arme—and you but drive the landlord and capitalist to employ a fresh batch of agents ³⁷

Buckingham saw the conflict as a war of conquest, extending American domination at the risk of national disunion

In 1847 the London Peace Society memorialized the French Government on aggressions in Haiti The revolutionary year 1848 saw English working men going to Paris and French workers visiting London in the interests of international understanding Popular agitation caused the English Cabinet to withdraw a proposal to increase the national armament, when Wellington asked for sixty thousand men to protect England from invasion, the peace advocates called for as many to work for their cause

The climax of the agitation was reached when the first World's Peace Congress assembled at Brussels in September, 1848 Elihu Burritt, the leading organizer of the Congress, planned originally to hold it in Paris, but the revolution intervened The Belgian authori-

³⁴ J S Buckingham, *Belgium, The Rhine, Switzerland, and Holland* (2 vols, London, 1848), II, 253

³⁵ J S Buckingham, *A Plan for the Future Government of India* (London, 1853), 61

³⁶ J S Buckingham, *Belgium, The Rhine, Switzerland, and Holland*, II, 414

³⁷ *The National Reformer and Manx Review*, May 22, 1847

ties smiled on the proposal and established a committee to aid with the arrangements. Over a hundred English delegates crossed the Channel. They travelled on a general passport, and their ship, the *Giraffe*, carried an immense white banner at the masthead, surmounting a British ensign. The Congress assembled in the Salon de la Grande Harmonie. An allegorical statue of Peace, holding a beehive in her hand and surrounded at her feet by figures symbolical of the sciences, arts, and industries, dominated the salon. About its walls hung the flags of Holland, England, Germany, France, Italy, and Belgium. Two white banners, lettered in gold "The London Peace Society" and "American Peace Society," were suspended in the chamber. Flowers, evergreens, and garlands completed a material expression of the pacific mood proper to the occasion.³⁸

The Congress considered the problem of war and peace from three points of view, namely, the inhumanity and absurdity of war, the desirability of arbitrating international disputes, and the feasibility of forming a "Congress of Nations." Bovet, a French delegate, placed the third proposition before the Convention and was eloquently supported by Burritt. Henry Vincent, the famous Chartist orator, discoursed on the tactics of pacifism. Buckingham gave what Burritt described as "an admirable speech" on "the historical, financial, and moral aspects of war." He described the ruins of the Ancient East as ample evidence of the effects of war. He cited England's experience with the national debt as full testimony of the injustice wrought by placing the cost of war upon unborn generations. He exposed the moral aspects of war with usual felicity of phrase and example.

It is a singular way of loving your fellow-man to thrust a bayonet through his body! And what can be more opposed to the precepts of Christianity, than to see bishops, servants of God, blessing the banners that are to be unfurled on the field of carnage.³⁹

He ended with words which, at this late date, seem a justification of all other futile words of the peace agitation, "May the banner of Peace be unfurled and float over the soil of Belgium."

Cobden sent a letter which was read amid great applause. The Manchester free trade apostle reminded the delegates that they were

³⁸ *Reports of the Peace Congress at Brussels, Paris, Frankfort, London, and Edinburgh in the years 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, and 1853* (London, 1861), 1.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

subject to ridicule as a protesting minority and urged them to recommend the adoption of treaties of arbitration and to agitate the question of disarmament He was doubtful about the desirability of forming a Congress of Nations ⁴⁰

Ramon de la Sarga, a Spaniard who had come not as a representative of a peace society but as an interested individual, attacked the idea of a Congress of Nations as impossible, absurd, and revolutionary Laws, he said, were based on the authority of God and force, and the modern order, founded upon opinion, was anarchical "How," he asked, "could a heterogeneous congress form a code of laws for social order?" At best the Congress could not exist without universal suffrage He also assailed arbitration, war had always existed and undoubtedly always would Buckingham answered him, speaking first in English and then in French, "If antiquity can render anything right, then fratricide and drunkenness are not improper —for Cain killed his brother, and Noah became drunken" In supporting war Sarga had condemned humanity, the peace advocates, Buckingham said, condemned only what was bad in humanity He defended the practicability of arbitration, citing the settlement of the Anglo-American Maine boundary dispute as an example of what could be done by friendly negotiations Laughter and smiles greeted one of his sallies, "There are some men who love to distinguish themselves by their originality Some are before, others are behind their times" Prolonged applause followed his concluding prophecy of a future of bloody Waterloos if arbitration was not adopted When Sarga insisted upon being heard in reply to a Belgian delegate's remarks in favour of disarmament, Buckingham cut him off by moving a resolution of thanks to the president of the Congress ⁴¹

Every sort of paper found something about the Congress and its proceedings worthy of comment Sarga's remarks echoed throughout many columns of type In general, the French journals were more respectful than the English *The Manchester Times* remembered that the war system was bound up with the interests of the aristocracy and argued that a democratic suffrage was essential to the establishment of a secure peace *The London Express* thought that the middle class was a sufficient guarantee against war, characterizing the

⁴⁰ *Reports of the Peace Congress at Brussels, Paris, Frankfort, London, and Edinburgh in the years 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, and 1853.* 20

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 22, 34, 43, *Congrès des Amis de la Paix Universelle, réuni à Bruxelles, en 1848* (Bruxelles, 1849), 35–36, 49, 72.

advocacy of "a high-court of nations" as fanatical *The London Times* foresaw "The final lesson which effectively teaches universal peace will be written in the rudest characters of obstinate and protracted war"⁴²

Upon returning to England a delegation of peace advocates called upon Lord John Russell and read to him the resolutions of the Congress, which condemned war and advocated arbitration, disarmament, and a high-court of nations. The Premier informed them that the English people had a deep interest in peace. The peace men then organized a nation-wide agitation, holding meetings in London, Birmingham, Manchester, and Edinburgh, as well as in nearly one hundred and fifty smaller towns. At York a rubber medallion, bearing a likeness of Burritt, was struck. Cobden acted as parliamentary spokesman for the agitation and in June, 1849, brought forward in the Commons a resolution proposing the placing of arbitration clauses in treaties with foreign countries. Russell and Palmerston agreed with the principle of arbitration but argued that the disturbed condition of Europe and America made its adoption impossible. Russell denied that the settlement of the Maine boundary dispute was an example of arbitration as advocated by the peace society. The resolution was beaten by a vote of 176 to 79, but the peace men felt that the consideration of their programme by the national legislature was itself a victory.⁴³

Although Buckingham kept in touch with the peace movement, he did not take part in this agitation, nor did he attend the subsequent congresses, except the London meeting of 1851, which were held yearly until the outbreak of the Crimean War. After leaving Brussels, he visited Paris before returning to England. During the three previous autumns he had toured Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Southern France, and Italy. The Pope received him in a private audience. Piedmont refused him permission to carry Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* across its borders. Late in 1848 he went to Scotland, where he lectured on Palestine and took part in temperance and peace meetings. At this time several friends started a testimonial fund for the purpose of building him a lecture hall in the London West End, but like earlier and similar projects it came

⁴² *The Herald of Peace*, VI (1848), 395, *The Manchester Times*, September 30, 1848, *The London Express*, September 26, 1848, *The London Times*, September 27 and 29, 1848.

⁴³ *The People's Journal*, VII (1848), *Annals of Progress*, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 28, *Parliamentary Debates*, CVI (1849), 53-121.

to nothing. Not until 1851 when Lord John Russell placed him on the civil list for two hundred pounds a year did he receive a public reward for his various labours. The Kings of Prussia, Belgium, and Sweden sent him gold medals as testimonials to his efforts for "Temperance, Education, Benevolence, and Peace." During his last years he resided in St. John's Wood, that quiet London suburb to which lawyers, artists, bankers, stock-exchange brokers, half-pay officers, and well-to-do divines retired.

From 1851 until his death, June 30, 1855, Buckingham was president of the London Temperance League. This organization came into existence as the result of temperance demonstrations held during the Crystal Palace Exposition. Visitors to the Crystal Palace were greeted with the signs, "No Spirits, Wine, Beer, or other Intoxicating Liquors admitted within this Building" and "Persons found smoking in any part of the Building will be removed by the Police." And the exhibitors were given a little work entitled *An Earnest Plea for the Reign of Temperance and Peace as conducive to the Prosperity of Nations*, written by James Silk Buckingham and distributed with the approbation of Prince Albert. The author called the exhibition a "School of Temperance." From July 31 to August 6 the London temperance societies united in a general demonstration, opening with a two days' conference of the chief leaders. On Sunday, August 3, temperance sermons were preached in a score of London churches. On Monday Exeter Hall resounded to temperance oratory and singing.

Ye Sarahs, now arise,
 Ye Miriams, come forth!
 With Hannahs, truly wise,
 Now prove your worth
 No power like yours, save that above
 To teach sobriety and love ⁴⁴

On Tuesday the members of all London temperance societies visited the Crystal Palace in a "Grand Teetotal Demonstration of All Nations." Each member wore a white rose as symbol of his pledge. On Wednesday morning three hundred ladies and gentlemen sat down to breakfast, with James Silk at the head of the table, in the afternoon twenty thousand people joined in a gigantic temperance procession to the Surrey Zoological Gardens. At the close of these demonstrations an address to the Queen and a petition to Parliament

⁴⁴ *Temperance Hymns* (4th ed., London, 1853), 38

were drawn up, and with the balance of five hundred pounds remaining in the hands of the committee it was decided to launch a new temperance society for the promotion of total abstinence. Associated with Buckingham as leaders of the League were Lawrence Heyworth, a friend since parliamentary days, John Cassell, the publisher, and George Cruikshank, the illustrator. *The London Times* took the announcement of the organization of the League to promote "universal teetotalism" as an opportunity to comment upon the force of association in bringing about social changes, remembering the close connection of the temperance and peace movements, it observed, "Drunkenness is always bad, war is sometimes good."⁴⁵

The League adopted a militant policy, aiming to revive the temperance enthusiasm which had declined during the exciting events of the late 'forties.⁴⁶ Its first report in 1852 recounted ten monthly programmes at Exeter Hall, seventy meetings in London, and five hundred free lectures, beside a tour of the country by F W Kellogg, a visiting American agitator. Three major events featured its yearly campaign. Each winter the members of Bands of Hope and other juvenile temperance societies gathered in Exeter Hall. Over six thousand children came in 1852. After singing temperance hymns and patriotic anthems, they adopted an address to Albert Edward, the Prince of Wales. Along with the address, which Buckingham signed in the name of the assembly, a copy of Reid's *Temperance Encyclopedia* was sent to the young prince. The annual May meetings aroused the adults to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, according to some of the more exuberant workers for "the cause," the angels of heaven looked forward to these meetings with devout pleasure and attended them with deep devotion. An annual outing was held in August or early September, consisting of a parade and visit to the Surrey Zoological Gardens. In 1854 several thousand teetotallers with bands and banners assembled in Russell Square. Some of the adults marched, while others rode in vehicles of all sorts—omnibuses, vans, cabs, broughams, clarences,

⁴⁵ J S Buckingham, *An Earnest Plea for the Reign of Temperance and Peace, as conducive to the Prosperity of Nations* (London, n.d.), 141. *The Temperance Offering, consisting of Essays, Tales, and Poetry, furnished gratuitously by eminent temperance writers* edited by James Silk Buckingham (London, 1852), 88–90. *The Illustrated London News*, July 5 and August 9, 1851. *The London Times*, October 11, 1851.

⁴⁶ London Temperance League, *Register of Names, Residences, and Occupations of Members. Reports of Proceedings of the League From Dec., 1852 to Dec., 1853 And an Almanac for 1854* (London, 1854), *passim*.

and gigs Hundreds of children—"young teetotal England"—added their clatter to the general noise of the crowd At the head of the procession rode Mr Buckingham and John Bartholomew Gough, "the American high priest of the pump" From Russell Square the parade marched to Tottenham Court Road, out Oxford Street, down Regent Street to Whitehall, and over Westminster Bridge Thousands of persons lined the streets and cheered the various divisions of the procession In 1853 the parade was featured by the East India Company Brass Band, riding in a car drawn by four grey horses⁴⁷

John Bartholomew Gough was born in England, but his conversion to teetotalism and rise to prominence as an orator had occurred in America, where, in the late 'forties, he was widely known as the most powerful advocate of "the cause" F W Kellogg successfully executed the League's commission to bring him to England He arrived in London, August 1, 1853, and on the next day was given an enthusiastic welcome at Exeter Hall He had been well press-agented, his *Autobiography* having been distributed during the May meetings and a lecturer having been sent into the country to announce his coming The flags of England and the United States were draped about the hall The united choirs of the temperance societies and the Shapcott band provided music for the occasion When Gough advanced toward the platform, leaning on the arm of Buckingham, "the enthusiasm was boundless, many wept for joy" The crowd chanted a welcome

See the Temperance Hero comes
Sound the Trumpets, beat the drums!

Buckingham spoke a few words, and then Gough addressed the assembly for two hours⁴⁸ An excerpt from one of his orations reveals both his style and his argument

The wife's face was ghastly pale, the eye large, and sunk in the socket, with her long thin fingers she gripped my hand, and with the other took the hand of her husband, and her face, sharp as it was, looked

⁴⁷ *The Temperance Chronicle*, I (1852), 255, 290, 337, *The Illustrated London News*, February 21, 1852, *The London Times*, August 15, 1854

⁴⁸ *The Autobiography of John B Gough with a continuation of his life to the present* (London, 1855), 155, J Thomas, *The Life and Times of John B. Gough, 1817-1878* (London, 1878), 113 *et seq.*, *The British Banner*, August 3, 1853.

radiant in the light that seemed to bathe it, coming from the throne of everlasting love. She then told me what a good husband she had. "Luke," she said, "is a kind husband and a good father, he takes care of the family and is very kind to them, but the drink, you know, sometimes makes a little difficulty." Oh! that little difficulty! God only and the crushed drunkard's wife know what it is. The man shook like a leaf, then tearing down his wife's night dress, he said, "Look at that!" On her white shoulders was a bad-looking bruise. Again he said, "Look at that!" and I saw a mark on her neck, which made my flesh creep. "Three days before she was taken sick," he said, "I struck her—God forgive me! She has been telling you she has got a good husband. Am I? Am I a good husband? Look at that! God Almighty forgive me!" He bowed over the woman, and I never saw a man cry so in my life, it seemed as if he had gone into convulsions. "Don't cry, Luke," sobbed his wife, "don't, please don't, you would not have struck me if it hadn't been for the drink, now you have signed the pledge we shall all be happy again. Don't cry."⁴⁹

Gough's success was complete, and his tour of the counties was a triumph. He remained in England two years, speaking continuously and before all kinds of crowds.

The aim of this agitation was to bring about the legislative control of the liquor traffic. The immediate objective was the closing of the public houses on Sunday. In 1853 the Commons was induced to appoint a select committee to investigate their operation, its report in the following year was hostile to the liquor interests. Beer and spirits were adulterated. Unhealthy competition forced the publicans to resort to improper measures for securing customers. The publicans were under the thumb of the brewers. And the licensing system, by recognizing different types of houses, promoted the evasion of the law. In 1853 an act closing the Scottish houses on Sunday was passed, and after the select committee's report a law shutting the London houses from 2.30 p.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday and from 11 p.m. Sunday to 4 a.m. Monday was carried.

But the ultimate purpose of the agitation was a "Maine Law," that is, a prohibitory act, for England. Buckingham had brought Gough to England to advocate such an enactment. To further this end the United Kingdom Alliance for the Total Suppression of the Liquor Traffic by the Will of the People was organized at Manchester. Its chief promoters were Nathaniel Card and Samuel Pope, Sir Walter C. Trevelyan became its first president. The preliminary work

⁴⁹ *Orations delivered on Various Occasions by J. B. Gough* (London, 1855), 59.

of organization was completed in June, 1853, but the first public meeting was not held until October. Buckingham was called out from London to present the leading paper, "The Justice, Policy, and Safety of a Maine Law for England." He contended that the very foundation of the English constitution was *salus populi suprema lex*, pointing out how on this principle quarantine regulations were established, noxious manufactures prohibited, urban burial grounds closed, smoke consumption enforced, and the inspection of ships, trains, and factories carried on. "It is, therefore," he argued, "a literal exemplification of the Scriptural phrase of 'straining at the gnat and swallowing the camel' to be legislating for the suppression of the smaller evils, and letting the *MONSTER EVIL* of all go untouched." To those who cried that a prohibition law would confiscate private property, he answered that when brothels and gambling houses were closed and when bad food was destroyed no such argument was raised. As for the enforcement of such a law he proposed the establishment of a public liquor dispensary in each town at which physicians' prescriptions might be filled, he also advocated the extension of the right of entry and search to all premises where liquor was kept illegally. Such contraband liquor was to be poured into the street.⁵⁰

In the face of this agitation the publicans met at Birmingham and formed the United Town Licensed Victuallers' Association. They declared their craft assailed and adopted a resolution announcing their resistance, "Let then our watchword be—unity, determination, self-defence, and protection for ourselves and families—perseveringly carried out by all our combined energies and powers and so to prevent, if possible, sacrifices too alarming to contemplate." *The Edinburgh Review*, when noticing the renewed vigour of the temperance forces, asked them to remember that the true solution to the liquor problem was the creation of libraries, parks, and museums for the people. The United Kingdom Alliance, however, pursued a policy of political opposition, adopting the practice of asking candidates for Parliament to indicate their attitude toward the liquor traffic. A year after Buckingham's death the London Temperance League and the National Temperance Society merged in the National Temperance League.

Buckingham received overflowing praise from fellow workers in

⁵⁰ J. S. Buckingham, *The Justice, Policy, and Safety of a Maine Law for England* (Manchester, 1853), *passim*.

the various reform movements In a review of his most ambitious pronouncement upon social reform, *National Evils and Practical Remedies*, *The British Banner* expressed the esteem which was accorded him at Exeter Hall and in other centres of humanitarian agitation

Mr Buckingham would seem from his youth, to have been, in a great measure, divested of the prejudices which are natural to man, whether affecting people or things, nations or institutions, and to have examined for himself every object and subject in the light of intuitive sagacity . Had he been a lord—even a pauper lord—or a commoner with a hundred thousand pounds in his pockets—no matter how obtained—he had been, by this time, glorified beyond all precedent He has, in some respects, been the Bacon of moral, political, and philanthropic philosophy Since he came on the stage, it has been crowded with all sorts of performers, the bulk of whom have done but little for the world, while a few have done considerable things for themselves, rejoicing in statues, in tablets, and in pensions, less monuments of their merit than of mankind's folly Take the case of Father Mathew, for example, as one of the better sort, a gentleman who has obtained the praise of senators, and something more substantial—a pension of 300£ per annum, on the ground of his advancing the interests of morality by his Temperance labours—a cause in which the labours of the worthy priest are but as the dust in the balance against those of Mr Buckingham The best contrast supplied by the living generation is that of Mr Cobden, who seized upon one idea—an idea of Mr Buckingham's—and this idea, in itself exceedingly simple, he thoroughly mastered, and then, in ten thousand forms, he repeated it throughout the length and breadth of the land, till by hundreds of thousands he made converts, by whose strength he stormed the Legislature, vanquishing the Government, and fairly triumphed, and the nation, chaunting his praises, threw upon his shoulders a robe of gold ⁶¹

The Reverend John Campbell, a temperance advocate, and J Passmore Edwards, an ardent peace man, agreed that Buckingham “was not simply ‘before his day’ ”, “he was above it ”

At his death a committee of the National Temperance Society resolved that “the memory of his labours will prove a powerful stimulus to exertion in the cause of temperance and every other work of Christian usefulness and love” *The Temperance Chronicle*'s obituary called him “a truly distinguished man” and observed, “His

⁶¹ *The British Banner*, August 22, 1849, see also J Passmore Edwards, *Biographical Magazine, Lives of the Illustrious*, IV (1853), 62 On Buckingham as a precursor of Cobden and Bright see J A Hunter, *The History and Topography of the Parish of Sheffield in the County of York* (London, 1859), 178.

life was Longfellow's celebrated Psalm antedated, or otherwise stated, that psalm is his life set to poetry and music "⁵²

Although Buckingham's later life was largely devoted to the temperance cause, he never lost interest in colonial and Indian affairs

After visiting Canada he advocated systematic colonization as a means of lifting England's burden of social distress. He argued that since so much money had been squandered in maintaining "the balance of power," a little might be spent "to balance the population" by making war on "poverty, disease, and crime." The Government ought to help Englishmen find homes in the colonies. In contrast to Wakefield's policy of selling the colonial lands he proposed a system of free grants, somewhat similar to the American homestead system. To every family with one child he suggested giving one hundred acres, the Government retaining the right to recover the land if it had not been improved and brought to a full state of cultivation at the end of seven years. He recommended the use of naval vessels for transporting colonists and also the appropriation of imperial funds for the support of colonial education. England's true colonial policy, he contended, was to plant the distant lands with her surplus population, to remove all restrictions upon their commerce and industry, and to raise up an independent race of subjects among whom neither ecclesiastical nor political tyranny would ever be tolerated.⁵³

⁵² *The Temperance Chronicle*, IV (1855), 122. In his attack upon "the Drunken Committee," Francis Place sketched its chairman "Mr. Buckingham is a well travelled man, he has been in many countries and combated many difficulties in uncommon situations, he has seen much of mankind under very varied circumstances, but he has not attained that profound knowledge of them which he might have done had he been a correct observer and an accurate thinker. He is an active bustling man, never without a purpose, and unusually persevering to accomplish his purposes however much he may want judgment in some optional particulars which ultimately make his efforts of little avail." See *British Museum Add. MSS., 27829, f. 72, p. 86*. For another contemporary estimate see Spencer T. Hall, *Biographical Sketches of Remarkable People, chiefly from Personal Recollection* (London, 1873), 202. "A greater contrast to Thomas Carlyle in mode of thought and expression it would be impossible to imagine, yet showing remarkable sympathy with the advanced spirit of his time, wherever or in whatever character its physiognomy was presented, he [Buckingham] not only caught its portent, but gave his hand to it as one of its readiest ministers."

⁵³ J. S. Buckingham, *Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the other British Provinces of North America, with a Plan of National Colonization* (London, 1843), 439 *et seq.*

In 1851 when visiting France he met a number of French speculators, who had received a concession in Costa Rica. They proposed to organize the Atlantic and Pacific Junction and the Costa Rica Colonization Company, the discovery of gold in California, having stimulated interest in the Pacific coast, offered what they thought was an opportunity for a profitable investment in a canal or a railroad. Buckingham advocated the construction of a canal, arguing that its effects upon commerce would be greater than a Suez Canal, and as a result he was commissioned to raise capital for the enterprise in London. But the only result of his efforts was the production of a prospectus describing the speculation. The outbreak of a political disturbance in Central America put an end to the dream.⁵⁴

James Silk's final remarks on imperial affairs repeated his first, they were criticisms of the Indian Government. In 1853 the expiration of the East India Company's Charter raised the Indian problem again, and a heated controversy developed both in and out of Parliament.

Speaking for the Ministry Sir Charles Wood proposed to do nothing more than reorganize the Board of Directors. In defending the existing regime he called attention to how roads, canals, and other public works had been built, how slavery had all but disappeared, and how the abolition of widow-burning had been enforced. Wood's references to road-building as one of the notable works of the Indian establishment contrasted sharply with Macaulay's comments in 1833 when he was making fun of Buckingham for decrying the state of Indian communications. Sir Robert Inglis saw no reason for changing any proposition adopted in 1833. And Sir James Hogg, who had delivered the Company's final philippic against Buckingham in 1836, answered Bright, who opposed the Government's proposal, by asking, "Had Manchester any reason to complain?" Hogg answered his own question by citing figures to prove that Manchester's trade with India had greatly increased since 1833.

Bright, backed by a well-organized agitation, called for the abolition of "the double government", the Company had to go, India must be brought directly under the Crown. His speech recapitulated all those charges which had been raised against the Company.

⁵⁴ J. S. Buckingham, *Colonization of Costa Rica, for the development of rich mines of gold, silver, lead, copper, iron, and coal and for opening a new route between the Atlantic and the Pacific With a map of the territory and route* (London, 1852), *passim*.

since 1813. His supporters had even sharper tongues. Again the Company was accused of furnishing its own orators and pamphleteers with documents but denying them to Parliament. The great failure since 1833 had been the refusal to appoint any natives to places in the Indian Government. Hume insisted that the Indian people ought to be heard in the matter of their government.

Buckingham added his voice to the discussion in a pamphlet, *A Plan for the Future Government of India*. As before he began his argument by describing the degradation of the natives, quoting Sir Thomas Munro, "The Company leave them their skins only," and citing the contrasting incomes of the viceroy and the ryot. He assailed the existing regime for raising the salaries of the Directors in England while neglecting the millions in India. He proposed setting up a Cabinet Minister for Indian affairs, introducing Indian representation into Parliament, and creating an Indian legislative council, composed of Englishmen and Indians in equal numbers. Each of the five presidencies was to elect two Englishmen and two Indians to this body. Buckingham did not discuss suffrage qualifications. The viceroy was to preside over the council. As a programme for its immediate consideration he proposed the revision of taxation, the purification of the administration of justice, and the promotion of the education of the people. He believed that Sanskrit was a dead language and advocated teaching both English and the vernaculars. The poor should receive their schooling free, and they should be instructed in practical subjects like physiology and agriculture.⁵⁵

If these proposals do not meet the ideals of the twentieth century, it should be remembered that they were far in advance of any other conceptions of the relations to be established between England and India, as set forth by either Englishmen or Indians of Buckingham's own day. Certainly "the free mariner," who became the leading spokesman for the freedom of the press in India, desired to put an end to that regime which Sir Charles Wood epitomized, "We go, we govern, and we return."

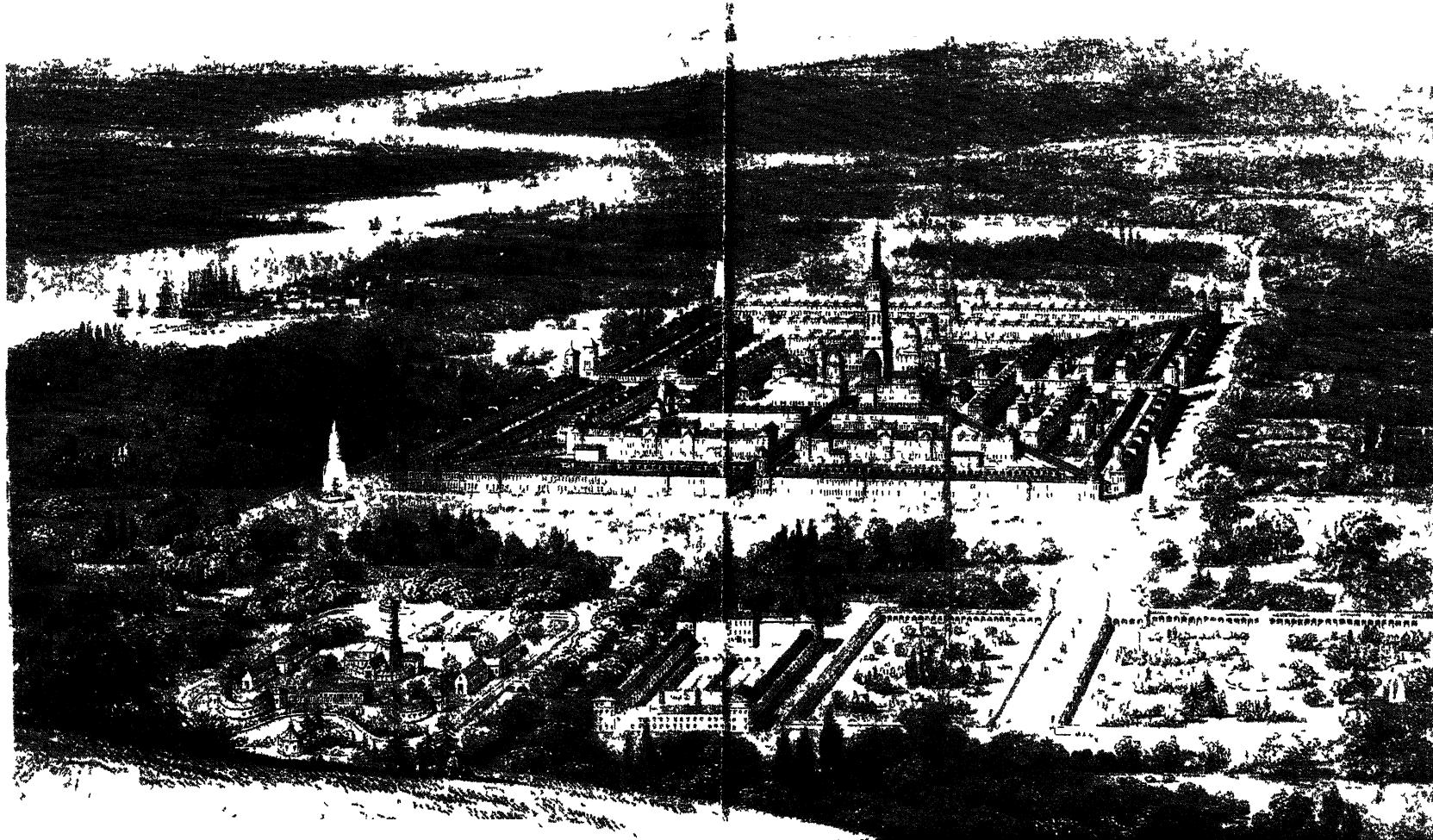
⁵⁵ J. S. Buckingham, *A Plan for the Future Government of India* (London, 1853), *passim*. The pamphlet was widely reviewed in the newspapers and went through three editions by 1854.

4. *UTOPIA BUCKINGHAM'S SPECIFICATIONS*

English liberalism was the philosophy of the middle classes, advancing in wealth and power under the leadership of the new industrial capitalists. The 'forties heard its principles declared in a simplified but emphatic form by "the Manchester school," which became the "fountain head" of the later Liberal party. From this matter-of-fact outlook of the "millocrats" the Manchester School extracted a social philosophy which reduced Bentham's pleasure-and-pain calculus to units computable in the price of a hank of cotton yarn. The sources of liberalism in the early struggle of the middle classes against the authority of the Church, the Crown, and the Aristocracy made it a creditable expression of the worth and rights of the individual, but the economic circumstances of its maturity distorted it into a mean assertion of duty and resignation for the common man.

When Adam Smith repudiated the economic motive of the landlords as childish and whimsical, he added that "the merchant and artificers, much less ridiculous, acted merely from a view to their own interest, and in pursuit of their own peddler principle of turning a penny wherever a penny was to be got." In explaining the comparatively greater happiness of modern civilization as the result of enterprises undertaken by commercial men, Bentham paid homage to the social utility of the peddler principle. James Mill went on record in favour of large-scale enterprise and mass-production under capitalistic administration as the best method of operating machines and labour.

The 'forties gave a full vindication to middle-class supremacy. Macaulay, who adapted the Whig tradition to liberal principles, declared that the higher and middling orders are the natural representatives of the human race. In *A Layman's Contribution to the Knowledge and Practice of Religion in Common Life* William Ellis argued that the evidence of a man's ability to take care of himself is "an indispensable test of his ability to take care of others." Cobden, the original spokesman for the Manchester School, supported the middle-class dictatorship by denying to the landlords and workers the right to power. "Could not England," he asked, "do without a set of men devoted to cards, dice, foxes, hares, dogs, guns, and carriages, living in all pomp and wealth and ease?" To his way of thinking a Trades Committee would be a worse tyrant than the



A DRAWING OF BUCKINGHAM'S PROPOSED MODEL TOWN
From *National Evils and Practical Remedies* (1849)

Dey of Algiers, and all men who did not like Manchester ought to migrate to America

Liberals, especially those of the 'forties, looked to private initiative, personal judgment, and unrestrained competition to secure the good of the individual and therewith a fractional part of the good of society William Rathbone Greg, a Manchester "millocrat" who turned essayist, asserted that competition, if allowed to operate unchecked, would effect a wiser, juster, more productive, more expansive, and more adaptable distribution of employments than any government, guild, or committee which the wit of man could devise Greg also argued that the demand of the labourer for employment—the notion that he has a right to have work found for him—is, when submitted to the test of reason, a clear absurdity *The Edinburgh Review* assured its public that the advocates of state interference as a means of promoting the welfare of the working class were attempting to transplant into modern society the beneficial part of slavery and that, although the motive was benevolent, the proposal was self-contradictory As Ricardo had said, the remedy for the miseries of the people was in their own hands, "They might exercise a little of that caution which the better educated felt it necessary to use" Or they might employ, after the suggestion of Malthus, "the union of individual prudence with the skill and industry which produces wealth" James Mill had calmly informed the poor that, since they did not possess the means to buy the conditions of health, the high mortality among their children was unavoidable

Never was the full meaning of the liberal philosophy for common men better stated than in *The Westminster Review*'s comments upon Mrs Gaskell's *Mary Barton* The liberal organ looked forward half a century to 1899, when political economy had been given its proper place in the schools, and foresaw John Barton, weaver and economist, saying to himself at the outset of his career

To live with comfort and respectability in this world, man must not only be industrious—he must be economical, I, in common with all other men, must save I am now young I shall be old I am strong and healthy I may be weak and ailing It is my *duty*, then, to myself and society to save If I do not perform this duty, misery is my inevitable lot. If my neighbours neglect it equally with myself, general misery *must be* the consequence

This world in which I am placed is a progressive world Every day, some new industrial improvement is brought to light I must, accord-

ingly, be skilful to act in accordance with the mechanical contrivances, already in operation, and alive to adapt myself to forthcoming machinery, and economical, to keep myself, if incapable of further adaptation

Experience tells me that this world is not uniformly filled with prudent and well-informed men I must, therefore, provide against the ignorance and imprudence of my employer He may over-engage himself at one time, and subsequently be obliged to dismiss a portion of his labourers, or become insolvent, and be obliged to shut up his works Folly similar to his may prevail among others My duty to myself commands me to acquire, by saving, a capital for myself—a duty which every well informed and well conducted labourer can perform

Lastly I must be careful to perform all the duties imposed upon me by society, and still more careful to perform those which I voluntarily assume The tenderest and most sacred duties which await me, if I shall ever be qualified to undertake them, are those of a parent Feeling, as I have felt, the severity of early struggles in which I was involved by the ignorance and imprudence of my own parents, I will religiously guard my offspring, against unnecessary suffering I know that Great Britain maintains twenty millions of inhabitants, not quite in so satisfactory manner as could be wished, it is true, but twenty millions are maintained Great Britain, however, is incapable of maintaining that number of savages—of lazy, ignorant, thrifless, untractable beings, it can only maintain that number of industrious skilful, economical, and orderly beings If then I become the parent of a savage—of the one-twenty-millioneth part of a savage community, I become the parent of a being that must necessarily be wretched himself, and a curse to society But my child must be a savage, if I shall not have made preparation for his reception—if I have not thoughtfully planned for his nourishment, clothing, lodging and instruction during his tender years My duties—duties imposed upon me by the conditions on which comfortable existence in this world depends, are obvious, as are the duties of all We must practise industry and skill to produce, economy to save, and parental forethought to provide a proper reception for our own offspring ⁵⁶

In addition to such doctrines the liberal code of working-class conduct repudiated strikes for any purpose and identified the interests of the employer and the employee, who must look to the increase of his employer's profits as the means of his own economic advancement. For only by competition among employers for labour could wages ever be increased In any event the worker was not to expect earthly happiness in the words of Alexander Ure, "The first and great lesson—inculcated equally by philosophy and religion—is that

⁵⁶ *The Westminster Review*, LI (1849), 60

man must expect his chief happiness, not in the present, but in a future state of existence."

Liberals believed in reason, in self-interest, in competition, in freedom, in toleration, in economy, in prudence, in utility, in *laissez-faire*, and in progress a veritable decalogue for the attainment of social salvation Reform meant little more to them than wiping out the abuses of the old society—certainly no unimportant work—and they proposed to allow the new social order to shape itself entirely without plan or guidance except such as might arise from what they called nature, reason, and liberty They were concerned about justice, but it was a justice that took account not at all of need but only of effort Samuel Smiles's *Self Help*, whose popularity attested to the conversion of a large part of the masses to the liberal gospel, taught that the world belonged to enterprising persons and illustrated the text with accounts of the careers of self-made men

As practical measures liberal politicians advocated the extension of markets, the lowering of taxes, economy in governmental expenditures, peace and disarmament (largely because war is expensive), and the organization of institutions of thrift so that all men might become capitalists William Rathbone Greg declared that, if the industrious, the frugal, and the foreseeing worker—whose parents before him had been industrious, frugal, and foreseeing—could not rise above his original position, the construction of society was somehow at fault and progress was a mockery That Gladstone accepted governmental interference as a means of protecting health was largely due to John Stuart Mill and Edwin Chadwick, who, faced with the tragedy of the great towns, found reasons for justifying the right of society to intervene in certain private arrangements But Mill was careful to stipulate that this right of society did not extend to the enactment of "a Maine law" or to the restrictions of the sale of narcotics and poisons, for such restraints were limitations on the liberty of the buyer

The liberal Utopia was a gigantic but planless Panopticon in which each man watched every other man, each seeking by incessant labour and quick grasping to amass the largest part of the wealth available for his support More concretely, it was a universalized stock exchange, quite like the one in which Ricardo had made his millions On the other hand, the liberal Hell was a place where no profits could be made The liberals confused individual wealth with social well-being, worse still, they rationalized the confusion

and drew from it a policy which they followed with a narrow-minded zeal

In that burst of parliamentary investigations and literary effusions which laid bare "the condition of England," liberalism found many critics Carlyle, who mistook the thunder of his own vocabulary for the wrath of God, called it "a pig philosophy" Perhaps Charles Kingsley, the literary spokesman for the abortive Christian Socialist movement, was more vehement than any one else against its panacea

Sweet Competition! Heavenly maid!—Now-a-days hymned alike by penny-a-liners and philosophers as the ground of all society—the only real preserver of the earth! Why not of Heaven, too? Perhaps there is competition among the angels, and Gabriel and Raphael have won their rank by doing the maximum of worship on the minimum of grace? We shall know some day In the meanwhile, "there are thy works, thou parent of all good!" Man eating man, eaten by man, in every variety of degree and method! Why does not some enthusiastic political economist write an epic on "The Consecration of Cannibalism"?⁵⁷

But more important than the investigations and literary effusions which informed the powerful and well-to-do about the ways of life in *Manchester* were those agitations which announced the advent of the true *Manchester* men—the industrial masses The Owenite and Chartist movements were the first eddies of that stream which Cooke Taylor foresaw as floating all society upon its breast

Robert Owen pursued the mirage of utopian communism, to be realized in a sylvan paradise, model home-colonies, co-operative labour, labour currency, rational religion, and fancy-dress balls with the ladies attending in bloomers England of the 'forties was given a last chance to observe the new order in action at Queenwood in Hampshire "C M"—Commencement of the Millennium—was cut into the corner-stone of Harmony Hall, and the firstborn of the colony was christened *Primo Communis* Flitcroft When the failure of the community left the world unregenerate, its founder sought the communion of spirits, ending his career by receiving messages from the Duke of Kent, who informed him that a committee of the two Houses of Parliament should be appointed to establish his system

The Chartist Movement, which gathered into itself much of the trades union strength, was the heir, through Paine and Cobbett and

⁵⁷ Charles Kingsley, *Cheap Clothes and Nasty*

Place, of the brighter hopes of adolescent liberalism But as the movement met defeat after defeat, it became confused and was important more as a manifestation of political and social consciousness among the industrial masses than as a clear expression of any particular ideal The primary aims were political, the ultimate ends were social and economic Feargus O'Connor founded a land scheme and established a village, O'Connorville, wherein each settler cultivated his holding with a spade The withered flowers on the window sills of Ancoats were to be made to bloom again

Both the Owenite and the Chartist Utopias looked back to the pre-industrial age, finding in the village and the garden rather than in the town and the factory the habitat for a better social order. In their longing to escape the discipline of the engine and the searing deprivations of the periodic crises, the industrial masses gave their support to ideals which offered security and the continuity of the only heritage which they knew—the cottager's "Johnny Raw," become "Joe Mechanic," was "Johnny Raw" still

But the inadequacy of these ideals does not in the least detract from the importance of the movements as manifestations of the rising power of the industrial masses, awake to the inequalities surviving from tradition and wrought by the new industrialism Revolutionary Socialism, as a third expression of this new power in society, owed both the definition of its programme and the determination of its tactics to these forerunners. Owenism, thoroughly materialistic in its conception of human nature, postulated a "new moral world," wherein wealth would be at the service of human need and aspiration Chartism declared the right of common men to act for themselves in the pursuit of their own ends Revolutionary Socialism proclaimed that "the new moral world" could be created only by the acts of common men, and those acts, because of the nature of the society, must necessarily be violent ones

The evolution of the socialist philosophy can be traced in the writings of Hall, Holly, Hodgskin, Edmonds, Hetherington, Bray, and O'Brien The latter's articles in *The Poor Man's Guardian* and *The National Reformer* bristled with denunciations of capitalists, aristocrats, and priests, characterized the state as the committee of the ruling class, and asserted the necessity of the class conflict. A full decade before the Communist Manifesto was written this Irish interpreter of industrialism had enounced every essential dogma of socialism Bray, perhaps, was more constructive, stating in a general

way the theory of planned economy as the only substitute for the existing economic anarchy

All is chance—all is disorder. There is no means of apportioning supply to demand, and demand to supply. What we want is to reduce this chaos to order, and this can only be done by system and organization.⁵⁸

According to the Marxian elaboration of this philosophy the ideal society was to be classless—all workers, unexploited and unexploiting, in the words of the Communist Manifesto, “an association in which the free development of each leads to the free development of all.” The line between industry and agriculture was to disappear, as trained industrial armies operated their common property and enjoyed the full fruits of their labour. Marx had a mystic faith in the power and intelligence of the revolutionary proletariat, that his ideal order would require intellectual leadership and an integrating administration hardly occurred to him. Marx accepted the machine and all that it might mean, but only by inference can it be said that he postulated a planned economy.

It is quite probable that Engels and Marx learned their lessons which transformed a German philosophy into a theory of social revolution from contacts not only with the English revolutionaries but also with Manchester Engels, who was in Manchester following the August strike of 1842, admitted that, while there, he became painfully aware of the economic factors which creating new class antagonisms and transforming politics, were the decisive elements in the modern world. At the same time he dispatched Chartist literature to Marx on the Continent, and by 1844 the latter was publishing similar ideas. A year later Marx came to England where, as the continental political reaction tightened, many other revolutionists found refuge. Under these circumstances, so Engels recorded, communism lost its utopian character and became a programme for a revolutionary proletariat. In this connection it is also well to remember that Engels's description of Manchester working-class life, which became the standard socialist polemic against capitalist society, presented facts which were already well known in England.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Quoted in J. S. Buckingham, *National Evils and Practical Remedies, with the plan of a model town* (London, 1849), 252.

⁵⁹ In 1842 *The Atlas* conducted a prize essay contest on the subject of national distress, and 158 essays were presented. The winner of the contest was Samuel Laing's *National Distress, Its Causes and Remedies* (London, 1844). Engels's book was published in 1845.

In the triumph of the middle class and the advent of the industrial working class the traditional politics disintegrated. For the Whigs the period from Fox to Russell was a series of exigencies, with each situation producing a justification for abandoning the line of action shaped in terms of its predecessor. Then the Whigs disappeared, entering the new Liberal party or passing over to the Tories. For the Tories the period from Pitt to Disraeli was a series of compromises until at last the old rural Toryism was reconstituted into Conservatism.

The salvaging of the aristocratic leadership was a complicated process. First came the retreat of the "die hards"—Wellington, Eldon, and Croker. Then "the new Tories" compromised with liberalism. Canning urged *laissez-faire* against factory legislation, and Peel swallowed free trade. His followers of the 'forties called themselves "Liberal Conservatives." At the same time the Tory Evangelicals protested in the name of the industrial masses against *laissez-faire* and the regime of the industrial capitalists. But, like their great spokesman, Lord Ashley, who refused to visit the factories, they were more or less ignorant of actual conditions and not a little unfair in their attitude toward the industrialists. In fact, it is doubtful if Ashley, who characterized the evils of the manufacturing system as long hours, the truck system, and the payment of wages in beer shops and public houses, had an intelligent understanding of working-class needs or aspirations. His Utopia was a society of well-scrubbed and—if the practice had been known—well-disinfected Evangelicals, meekly submissive to the will of an austere but benevolent aristocracy. Since he was an aristocrat, the traditions of Tory historiography have made him the symbol of the whole social reform movement, but he saw no more of the fundamental problem than its aura of painful miseries. "God has ordained that there should be poor, but He has not ordained that, in a Christian land, there should be an overwhelming mass of foul, helpless poverty."

The synthesis of these diverging lines of Tory thought was achieved by Disraeli, but supporting him was a changed emotional temper which gave vitality to his appeal. Early in the century the poets Southey and Coleridge had called upon the Tories to realize that the aristocracy had obligations which included the amelioration of the distresses of the poor. This exposition of Tory principle marked the end of romanticism as a democratic gospel. By 1825 Shelley and Byron were dead, and Wordsworth, like the Tory poets, had repented

a youthful enthusiasm for Jacobinism As a social philosophy romanticism began by idealizing "the noble savage", it developed into that fantasy which set Lord Byron dickering with Greek brigands in the hope of re-establishing classical commonwealths (in 1823 even John Cam Hobhouse was looking forward to the quick organization of a Greek republic), and it ended in Scott's dress-parade portrayal of the ancestral types of the existing social orders—the fair ladies, the chivalrous knights, the simple peasants, and above all the patriotic beggars of the Middle Ages As long as the people were patriotic, the nation was safe, thus romanticism forgot democracy, remembered tradition, and discovered a new devotion.

In Disraeli's phrases, "the people" is a "term of natural history," but "a nation is a work of art and a work of time" Beside embodying traditional loyalties, nationalism has a dual meaning—power and welfare In terms of power Disraeli speculated in Suez Canal stocks and sublimated feudal pageantry in the Queen's Indian Durbar, in terms of welfare he accepted the Tory Evangelical conception of legislation and outdid the Liberals in promoting commercial expansion Thus conservatism came to mean the harmonious adjustment of interests so as to preserve the old, but also to admit the new—all, however, in service to the living entity, the nation, which was of the past and would be of the future Disraeli's Utopia was a complacent and well-ordered nation, integrated in terms of inequalities made bearable by proportionate obligations, and over it wafted the perfume of the primrose

Cutting through the traditional culture, the same forces which had disintegrated the old politics, stripped away those words and rituals which normally mask the motives of a society and bared those emotions which express basic social conditions or deep historical convictions Indeed, each of these primary conceptions of social policy rested upon such an emotional base Liberalism rejoiced in the keen satisfactions of successful individuals Radical Socialism proclaimed the fierce temper of an exploited class Conservatism called to the sympathies of benevolent aristocrats Owenism spoke the humane sentiments of rationalists Chartism sounded the vibrant enthusiasm of democrats And Christian Socialism remembered the ethics of Jesus The emotional sources of these conflicting social ideals gave them appeal as propaganda but left them weak as programmes for constructive action They were incomplete in the vital respect of lacking a technique of social improvement that would

operate under the conditions of the new industrial society, all of them shared, to a greater or less degree, a faith in progress as the inevitable movement of natural events

Buckingham also believed in progress and appealed to emotions. In the introduction to *National Evils and Practical Remedies* he praised "system" and "organization," and he began the first chapter with the New Testament verse, "God is love." He expounded the verse by describing the harmony that is exhibited in the mechanism of the planetary system, that is written in the sunbeams, and that is epitomized in the commandment, "Love one another." He drew from science no laws that condemned men to poverty and no theories that vindicated violence as a rule of life, his conviction ran in the current of late eighteenth-century romanticism, which described nature as good, and in the direction of the early twentieth-century view which opposed mutual aid to the struggle for existence as a factor in evolution. The general tenor of this part of Buckingham's thought is suggestive of Fourier and, occasionally, Sismondi. Buckingham's various journeys to France had no doubt brought him in contact with their doctrines. But Buckingham did not expect man to find in romantic sentiments anything more than a support for a mode of action different from that present one which operated so disastrously. He advised all those visionaries who despised the refinements of civilization and who dreamed of a savage Utopia in a fruitful woodland to make the experiment of searching for their ideal. And he believed that Christianity had failed in its social mission, after a thousand years of preaching, the inhabitants of Britain conducted themselves in ways quite opposed to its doctrines.⁶⁰ He transcended emotion to find in intellect the explanation of progress.

Both misery and well-being were due to human causes. The former was the result of ignorance, the latter was the product of "the progressive acquisition of useful knowledge and its judicious application to the arts, manufactures, cultivation, laws, government, and organization of society in all of its varied forms."⁶¹ Buckingham agreed with Owen that men "are moulded by circumstances" and supported the view by citing evidence gathered during his travels. In India he had seen the Parsees degraded under Moslem rule and elevated by Portuguese toleration. America showed him the white

⁶⁰ *The Oriental Herald*, XXI (1829), 37, *National Evils and Practical Remedies*, 121

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, I (1824), 91, *Ibid.*, 41

man and the red man, their respective cultures indicating the gap between a civilized economy and savagery. The grandeur of those ancient and classical empires, whose ruined structures he had seen, had been built by mental cultivation. England under the Anglo-Saxons and England under Victoria differed only because of the increase of knowledge and its successful application.⁶²

He gave modern history an intellectual interpretation. The mid-nineteenth century was "the Age of Inquiry," marked by a widely extended love of knowledge and its utilization for improvement. Three early modern achievements had accelerated this development first, the breakdown of ecclesiastical authority, second, the invention of printing, and third, the discovery of the new world and the route to India. And these causes had operated together to intensify the desire for knowledge and to promote its diffusion. Then came, as results, the advances in science and the invention of machines which increased the powers of production and extended the means of transport, and these in turn had facilitated an even greater exchange of facts and opinions. Unfortunately the multiplication of goods tended to obscure the truth that progress is intellectual, the evils of the 'forties were the direct result of the neglect of mental culture, which the struggle for wealth occasioned. The "Age of Inquiry" was interested in knowledge only as a means to wealth, and this was a prostitution of intellect to the service of animal appetites.⁶³

This emphasis upon the rôle of knowledge in shaping progress was not lip service to an ideal. Buckingham looked upon his travels as researches, whose results were additions to the existing body of knowledge, his lectures were efforts at its diffusion. *The Calcutta Journal* had excelled its competitors because it carried a wide variety of news and information. *The Verulam*, as the name indicates, was designed to advance the Baconian philosophy, one of its leading articles praised the work of the Royal Society. Shortly after *The Oriental Herald* appeared, he presented a statistical analysis of English social conditions. His advocacy of teetotalism was based more upon science than upon sentiment, as one of his temperance colleagues recorded, "Teetotalism is less a moral than a physical truth, to expound its doctrines, the divine is not so much needed as

⁶² *The Oriental Herald*, I (1824), 273, *Parliamentary Debates*, XVIII (1833), 53, *National Evils and Practical Remedies*, 40

⁶³ *Transactions of the British and Foreign Institute*, 25-27

the man of science "⁶⁴ In this connection it should be recalled that Buckingham desired accurate statistics for the use of temperance workers

On the surface this faith in the utility of knowledge may appear to be not a great deal different from that which led to the founding of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge and the establishment of *The Penny Magazine*, *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, and several other popular sheets, but closer investigation discloses that Buckingham had a clearer conception of the functional value of knowledge than the promoters of these enterprises Writing on the railroads in 1834, he proposed that a survey should be made with each project Such a survey would take into consideration not only present needs but also future contingencies resulting from the increase of population, the expansion of industry, and the growth of traffic He did not share the faith of the liberal philosophers in the finality of their dogmas,⁶⁵ nor did he believe in the value of contemplative learning, as did Francis Place, who thought that meditation on planetary mechanics would promote good morals On the contrary Buckingham insisted that men might possess correct information without being the better for having it "Knowledge," he said, "is a habit that must be kept fresh by constant wearing "⁶⁶

The suggested surveys of railroad projects hinted at the idea of utilizing knowledge for the purposes of social planning, Buckingham gave the idea an explicit expression in *National Evils and Practical Remedies* He enumerated eight leading social evils—ignorance, intemperance, national prejudice, monopolies, war, misery, and the conflict of self-interest and duty—and proposed the organization of "a model town" as a means of overcoming them He stated the general principle of what has come to be called "town-planning"

⁶⁴ Thomas Beggs, *Teetotallers and Teetotalism* (London, 1854), 4

⁶⁵ William Rathbone Greg expressed the claim of the Manchester School to final truth "Little do the mere impulsive philanthropists know, and ill can appreciate, the strenuous effort, the stern and systematic self-control by which the votary of economic science, the benevolent *man of principle*, keeps his head cool and clear in the midst of the nonsense he is called upon to contemplate, and the resolute nerve which is needed to throw cold water on the mischievous schemes of sanguine and compassionate contrivers" *Essays on Political and Social Science, contributed chiefly to The Edinburgh Review* (2 vols., London, 1853), II, 470

⁶⁶ *The Oriental Herald*, I (1824), 273, *The Parliamentary Review*, II (1834), 850.

The objects chiefly kept in view have been to unite the greatest degree of order, symmetry, space, and healthfulness, in the largest supply of air and light, and in the most perfect system of drainage, with the comfort and convenience of all classes, the due proportion of accommodation to the probable numbers and circumstances of various ranks, ready accessibility to all parts of the town, under continuous shelter from sun and rain, when necessary, with the disposition of the public buildings in such localities as to make them easy of approach in all quarters, and surrounded with space for numerous avenues of entrance and exit And, in addition to all these, a large intermixture of grass lawn, garden ground, and flowers, and an abundant supply of water—the whole to be united with as much elegance and economy as may be found practicable⁶⁷

The specifications gave detailed measurements and called for the utilization of the most recent advances in science and technology The construction was to be of iron, the latest methods of smoke consumption were to be applied, and a central tower, containing an electric arc, was to light the town

The ground plan called for an arrangement of structures in concentric squares Municipal buildings were located about an inner central square A hospital, a library, a university, a gallery of fine arts and antiquities, a public hall for use as a forum and a theatre, and five churches stood in a grand outer square Between these squares were the mansions of the town's most opulent families Around the outer central square was a covered arcade, one hundred feet wide, which served as a grand promenade, sheltered statuary and paintings, and provided space for band concerts In winter the arcade was to be enclosed and used as a concourse These squares constituted the heart of the town Beyond them were four series of residences Each residence was equipped with the latest sanitary equipment and possessed a garden A gallery with a flat roof, which could be used as a promenade, ran around each of the residential squares The outer series of residences was a mile long on each side and provided homes for the working class Wide grass lawns bordered the gardens, dining-halls, public baths, reading-rooms, and schools were built on these lawns A covered gallery, one hundred feet wide, stood between the working-class dwellings and the next series of houses, this gallery was given over to workshops A similar gallery, in which were bazaars and retail stores, was situated inside the second square Streets, one hundred feet wide and bordered with

⁶⁷ *National Evils and Practical Remedies*, 183.

colonnades, separated the residences and galleries. The houses backed to the streets and faced the gardens and lawns Eight avenues—Faith, Hope, Charity, Fortitude, Concord, Peace, Unity, and Justice—radiated from the inner square. At each end of these avenues was a fountain. Outside the square of working-men's houses were lawns, parks, playgrounds, botanical gardens, a gymnasium, and a public cemetery, beyond them were the factories, using steam power. The town occupied the centre of a ten-thousand-acre tract.⁶⁸

As Buckingham pointed out in explaining the plan, the 'forties was an age of models—model villages, model apartments, and model lodging houses. The *reductio ad absurdum* in models was reached in the proposal of model beds for model lodging houses. The mattresses were of rubber, the covering of leather, and the pillow was a waterproof cushion, each morning the lodger could wash them so that they would be clean for his successor.

The root of Buckingham's conception was in the development of model agricultural villages. David Yarrington, a late seventeenth-century writer, had projected such a community, he planned to arrange twenty farms about a central square of eleven acres, within which were a public well, the stocks, the shambles, a market house, a town hall, and the church.⁶⁹ In the nineteenth century Robert Owen added the factory and the school to the village, the first of several model communities of this design was promoted by Robert Adams in 1820 and was built at Orbiston. Early in the 'forties the Church of England became interested in such villages, and a society to promote one was formed. John Minter Morgan described the project in *The Christian Commonwealth*, the chief difference between the plan and Owen's scheme was the place allowed to the church.⁷⁰ Owen, of course, bitterly opposed Christianity; in Morgan's scheme the clergyman, along with a governor and a surgeon, ruled the village. Buckingham took part in the discussion of this proposal,⁷¹ his originality lay in adapting the idea of a planned community to town and industrial life. His effort in the 'thirties to empower towns to establish walks, parks, playgrounds,

⁶⁸ *National Evils and Practical Remedies*, 183 *et seq.*

⁶⁹ Patrick E. Dove, *Account of David Yarrington, the founder of English political economy* (London, 1854), 87.

⁷⁰ J. M. Morgan, *The Christian Commonwealth* (London, 1845), see also *Transactions of the British and Foreign Institute*, 410.

⁷¹ *The People's Journal*, I (1846), *Annals of Industry*, 46.

libraries, and galleries is evidence of the early tendency of his thought ⁷²

Even more noteworthy than this departure from the village idea was the completeness of the design, accompanied, as it was, by specifications, a ground plan, and a drawing. Buckingham put the problem of urban planning not only in terms of social engineering but also on a basis from which architects could work ⁷³ Other men of his time, like Thomas Chalmers, Robert Vaughan, Richard Slaney, and William Cooke Taylor, considered aspects of the new cities, but he went further than they in recommending the practical method which had been adopted in dealing with the most pressing problems of urban arrangements. In fact, he anticipated Ebenezer Howard, the creator of Letchworth, the original garden city. In discussing Buckingham's town, Howard admitted the similarity of its outward design to his plan but stressed the difference of its internal organization ⁷⁴

The institutional organization of Buckingham's town contained features of capitalism, communism, and a rigorous evangelicalism ⁷⁵

The town was to be organized as a joint-stock company, with each of its ten thousand members owning at least one share. No person was to possess more than five hundred shares. Its promoter was not a revolutionary, he believed that the existence of social classes was a fact of nature, just as was the career of talents, and, with this in mind, he divided the town's population into ten functional categories. The members of each group were to be rewarded according to the value of the labour they performed or of the service they rendered. A comparison of Buckingham's scale of rewards with those prevailing in his England reveals that he would have doubled the wages of the ordinary worker and reduced the emoluments of the salaried officials by nine-tenths. Each member of a working group was to receive a stipulated minimum wage, and at the end of each year, after a seven per cent dividend was paid and three per cent was set aside for a reserve fund, the remainder of the profits was to be distributed to the inhabitants of the town. Profits were to be realized by the sale of goods to persons outside the town. Through a harmonious

⁷² In 1845 Parliament passed an act (8 and 9 Victoria, c 43) empowering boroughs with over ten thousand inhabitants to support museums

⁷³ Lewis Mumford, *The Story of Utopias* (New York, 1922), 128

⁷⁴ Ebenezer Howard, *To-morrow a peaceful path to real reform* (London, 1898), plan facing page 14, 103, 113, see also Lewis Mumford, *op. cit.*, 128.

⁷⁵ *National Evils and Practical Remedies*, 142 et seq

adjustment of labour, land, and machine technology, Buckingham expected to bring about a very high rate of production, with a correspondingly high rate of profit Labour was to move from factories to land and *vice versa*, as need for it varied

To prove the practical character of what he called "associated labour," he cited the examples of the post office, the army and navy, American religious communities, like those of the Shakers and Rappites, and American corporations, especially those of Lowell, Massachusetts He also quoted many authorities, both ancient and modern, in favour of his proposal, as he said, the English had to have a precedent for everything

In fully accepting machine industry Buckingham was careful to avoid the worst evils of factory labour No child under ten years of age was to work more than four hours a day, no woman was to work longer than seven hours and then at the least laborious tasks, and the men were to work only eight hours All the factories were to be located in the open country and to be well-ventilated and -lighted He proposed reducing the numbers of persons engaged in the distribution of goods as a means of eliminating waste, of a similar nature was the recommendation for confining manufactures to useful commodities

The observation of the town's moral code was to be obligatory upon every owner of a share No wine, beer, liquor, tobacco, or opium was to be allowed in the town The possession of weapons, including gunpowder, was to be forbidden No work was to be performed on Sunday, which was to be a day of pleasant recreation. Prostitutes and violators of the sanctity of marriage were to be expelled from the community

In contrast to these extreme regulations were certain unique provisions for ordering the town's life All families possessing children were to occupy at least three rooms, a husband and wife were to have not less than two rooms Children were to be cared for by trained nurses in special institutions As much cooking and eating as possible was to be done in public dining halls A corps of teachers was to supervise the education of each child until it was fifteen years old Medical service was to be free, paid for by the community, and the chief attention of the doctors was to be directed toward the prevention rather than the cure of disease Justice was to be administered by trained arbitrators, likewise supported by the community The government was elective, each office open to every shareholder.

Suffrage was proportional to the number of shares owned by individuals. The revenues for the maintenance of these governmental functions were to be raised by the payment of rentals to the town for residences and by a graduated income tax.

An analysis of this plan and these institutions discloses Buckingham's general conception of social policy. He asserted, as his parliamentary career and the advocacy of prohibition testify, the right and duty of state interference to promote health, morality, and social justice. He believed in what his generation called "association" as opposed to competition, that is, the free joining of individuals in collective enterprises for their mutual profit and welfare. But he realized that neither state intervention nor association could function successfully unless guided by knowledge.

There is much in Buckingham's Utopia, which, from the twentieth-century point of view, is objectionable if not foolish and wrong, but his essential ideas compare favourably with those of his contemporaries, who, without having achieved anything like his synthesis, often appear quite as foolish and wrong. He believed in a society administered by persons fully aware that their interests were interdependent and keenly appreciative that they could be best realized only by a full utilization of all available knowledge. Liberals believed that welfare could be achieved by individuals using knowledge in the service of their own interests, Buckingham realized that a more general welfare could be secured by employing knowledge for social purposes, and he would have made the realization of such purposes the work of a socially controlled administration. There is a world of difference between the conception of knowledge which found expression in *The Westminster Review's* advice to John Barton and that which led Buckingham to conceive a model town. But even more important than this idea was his insistence upon the intellectual advancement of common men. He desired to draw out their dormant talents. His town plan shows clearly how intellectual opportunities were to be provided for every one, he criticized Lowell, Massachusetts, for failing at this point. Technology, he held, was in its infancy, and by a union of skill and knowledge with labour, continuous improvement for the people was possible. The primary aim of this improvement was not the mere increase of their wealth but the expansion of their cultural life, which he considered the highest of earthly goods.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ *National Evils and Practical Remedies*, 44, *Transactions of the British and Foreign Institute*, 27, 29.

The British and Foreign Institute and the plan for a model town established Buckingham as one of the foremost prophets of "the Great Society." The former was designed to institutionalize the international interdependence that had come with the railroad and steamships, the latter dealt with the problem of community life under industrialism.⁷⁷ He would have given to *Manchester* a soul, woven from the abilities and sentiments of common men and dedicated to the service of their needs and aspirations.⁷⁸ And his method—planned urban life, not simply in the arrangement of structures, streets, and parks, but more in the adaptation of institutions to the needs of urban dwellers—is the technique which any social policy, whatever its social or historical basis, must employ in dealing with the fundamental forces and forms of "the Great Society." His significance may be read in a passage from a recent book, *The Soul of Manchester*.

Our descendants will profit by our forethought or suffer from our neglect, judging us as we judge earlier figures in the vanished pageant of urban life. What better work can we achieve than make their path more easy, their homes more intimate, their public buildings more noble, their gardens more green—in a word that the city they inherit from us shall be more honourable, stately, and true? Of all earthly ideals that of the perfect city is the most romantic and inspiring, for it comprises the happiness of our race and the welfare of those who follow.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ J. L. Hammond and Barbara Hammond, *The Rise of Modern Industry* (New York, 1926), 223. "The problem of arranging and controlling the expansion of the town was the most urgent of the problems created by the Industrial Revolution."

⁷⁸ E. Wingfield Stratford, *History of British Civilization* (New York, 1929), II, 942. "And this phenomenon of the city without a soul is of the gravest import for the future of civilization, for if men form their cities, men are also formed by them."

⁷⁹ W. H. Brindley, *The Soul of Manchester* (Manchester, 1929), 32, see also M. Ilin, *New Russia's Primer, The Story of the Five-Year Plan* (American tr., Boston, 1931), 154-159, *passim*. "a green wall of parks will separate the heart of the city—the factory—from the residential sections. From the central square, like the rays of the sun, avenues and boulevards will radiate in all directions. White house-communes, schools, libraries, hospitals will be surrounded with flower beds. We must eradicate drunkenness, we must close shops of alcohol and replace saloons with theatres and moving pictures, with clubs and rest homes. We must root out uncouthness and ignorance, we must change ourselves, we must become worthy of a better life. And this better life will not come as a miracle—we ourselves must create it."

5. 1932 THE WORLD MOVES ON

The broken hulks of German submarines lie on the rocks under Pendennis Castle, inside Falmouth Harbour the white-sailed yachts hold regatta, and an old stevedore curses a shipping company's doctor who neglected his broken knee, "Dam' 'e, I tol' 'e out"

The tides flow up and down the Thames, dragging into the muck leaves, bicycle wheels, and battered sprinkling cans to bury with the debris of Rome, and ships drive down to sea.

Cleopatra's obelisk drips in the fog and sighs for the desert sun, the latest cable from Cairo says "riot" There is trouble in the Indian salt pans, the viceroy recalls old laws and issues new edicts, the world waits in vain for news, and an old Hindu sits and spins

The Clyde has given up bigamy and plays at free love with the Volga

A Sheffield innkeeper says that, although True Love's Gutter is no more, several footways deal in its wares, the new technology has more than one triumph to its credit Beggars slink through Paradise Square And baby carriages stand outside public houses

There is soot in Pittsburgh, political scandal in Pennsylvania, and more than one speakeasy in New Haven, but it is doubtful if the Mississippi Valley is as yet the home of a great civilization

(Peace to the soul of John Cam Hobhouse!) Highbred and lowbred females, too numerous to catalogue, sit in the House of Commons, and Labour is sore from riding the treasury bench

It is one of the many inexplicable problems that has never yet been solved, why or how it is that the History of the Past, which it is the duty of rulers and statesmen especially to study and understand, should serve so little purpose in preparing them to provide for the Progress of the Future

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⁸⁰ J S Buckingham, *Tour of France*, preface, ii.

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